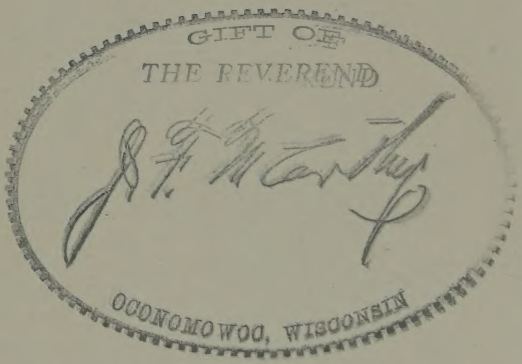
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ROBERT E. LEE

by

PHILIP ALEXANDER BRUCE, LL.D.

Author of "Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century," "The Plantation Negro as a Freeman," "Rise of the New South," etc.

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CONTENTS

	CHRONOLOGY	7
I.	EARLY LIFE	11
II.	FIRST MILITARY EXPERIENCE	35
III.	LOYALTY TO VIRGINIA	62
IV.	FIRST PART IN WAR OF SECESSION	97
V.	PENINSULA CAMPAIGN	128
VI.	SECOND MANASSAS AND SHARPSBURG	155
VII.	FREDERICKSBURG AND CHANCELLORSVILLE	189
VIII.	THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN	221
IX.	FROM THE WILDERNESS TO COLD HARBOR	257
X.	SIEGE OF PETERSBURG AND APPOMATTOX	280
XI.	AFTER THE WAR	311
XII.	MILITARY GENIUS	330
XIII.	GENERAL CHARACTER	355
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	370
	INDEX	372

ROBERT E. LEE

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES was once asked when the education of a child should begin. "Two hundred and fifty years before he is born," was the reply of that witty and genial philosopher. Of no man who has played a conspicuous part in American history can it be more justly said that his education began two hundred and fifty years before he first saw the light than of Robert Edward Lee. Nowhere else on our continent previous to the War of Secession had the current of local tradition, custom, habit, thought, and feeling glided on with so little change of character from the date of the earliest settlement as in those counties of Virginia which are washed in bay or river by the daily flow and ebb of the ocean tides. During the long interval between 1607 and 1861, the advance of this ancient area of country within the grooves set for it by the original English colonists had known but one rude shock, the Revolution, and even that would have left hardly a passing trace on the social life but for the disestablishment of the Anglican Church, and the abolition, at

the suggestion of the arch-democrat, Jefferson, of the law of primogeniture. The impression on the economic life was smaller still. It was only in a political way that the change was a serious one, and there, not because a new spirit of freedom had been created, but because the ultimate sovereignty had shifted from the King to the Commonwealth.

Lee was the offspring of a society which, in spirit and in framework, had undergone no radical alteration, though it had passed from monarchical to republican institutions. The Virginia of 1807, the year of his birth, was essentially the Virginia of 1707, in spite of its larger population, and its greater accumulation of wealth. It was still a community of plantations remarkable for the simplest of agricultural systems; *i. e.*, the production of a single staple by the hands of slaves. It is true that the bulk of the paternal landed estate no longer descended to the eldest son, but this subdivision made no real difference in the economic life of the people; an equal distribution of property among all the heirs merely put it in the power of more persons to cultivate the social habits and customs of their ancestors.

Many of the Virginians who reached manhood about the time Robert Lee was springing up into a robust and handsome youth, emigrated to the western or southwestern states; but those remaining behind in the old colonial homes, pursued the life which their fathers had led before them for many genera-

tions. Means of transportation to remote points were still so few that they rarely journeyed far from the shadow of their own residences and tobacco barns. Season after season and year after year, they tilled the ground; raised thoroughbred horses; intermarried with the members of neighboring families, to whom they were already allied by blood; attended the sessions of their county court, and the services of their church; danced at the country balls; were present at the local races; shot partridges, wild turkeys, and wild ducks in forest, field, or stream; hunted the fox with packs of trained hounds; played cards; adored a pretty woman; and were not averse to a mint julep at any hour of the day.

It was a careless, happy, and bountiful life. Nor was it without its serious side, as shown by the sensitiveness to all matters of personal honor, by the deep reverence for religion, by the respect for womanhood, and by the exalted esteem in which high political service was held. No alien people were pouring into those plantation communities to modify the moral standards, habits, and customs of the inhabitants by their foreign training; no newly enriched were starting up to pervert, by a lavish and vulgar use of wealth, tastes that had been refined by the inherited social culture of generations. English in descent, English in the whole tone of their social life, as far as consistent with republican institutions, the people of Tidewater Virginia, during those years when the character of Robert Lee was form-

ing, were English in their instinctive antipathy to novelty for mere novelty's sake; in their love of customs and habits descending from the remote past; in their passionate devotion to their homes and to their state; in their hearty recognition of the claims of kindred to the remotest degree; and in the primitive simplicity and strength of their personal qualities. About the hearthstones of those old plantations, the old-fashioned virtues of manliness, courage, truth, honor, kindness, and tenderness flourished as luxuriantly as the old-fashioned flowers, whose original seed perhaps had been brought from some manor-house in Surrey or Essex, Norfolk or Devonshire, bloomed on the terraces of the gardens outside.

Such in outline was the character of the social atmosphere which Robert Lee first breathed. All those particular leanings which this atmosphere tended so strongly to create and promote, were, in his instance, enhanced by his possession, in the highest degree, of every attribute which gave distinction to the social life of Virginia at that time. No man in the state, for example, was of more shining descent, or embraced in the circle of his near kin a larger number of families of extraordinary local distinction and influence; no man in the state was in his birthplace, his early years, and his marriage, associated with homes which enjoyed a greater reputation for generous and charming hospitality, for the highest social breeding, and for the ripest moral and intellectual culture.

His earliest ancestor to establish himself in Virginia, Richard Lee, is thought to have sprung from a family tracing its descent to Lancelot Lee, who took a conspicuous part in the Battle of Hastings; to Lionel Lee, who, at the head of a company of horsemen, followed Richard Cœur-de-Lion to the Holy Land, and won a high reputation for intrepidity at the Siege of Acre; and to Henry Lee, who, during the glorious reign of Elizabeth, received from his sovereign, as a reward for his extraordinary services, the insignia of the Garter. There can now be no doubt that the emigrant belonged to the Lees of Coton, a family of which it has been said that it possessed a high social standing, and enjoyed great influence when the immediate forbears of two-thirds of the members of the present English peerage had not risen from obscurity. Richard Lee, as his portrait, still in existence, shows, bore upon his person every mark and badge of a refined and cultured ancestry; his face, as there pictured, in regularity of feature, in comeliness and strength of expression, and in a certain serene and sedate pride, recalls the noblest of those aristocratic countenances which Vandyke has preserved for posterity on his immortal canvases. Nor did this handsome appearance belie the power of his intellect, or the winning grace of his address; he was conspicuous in the contemporary life of Virginia for personal dignity, polished courtesy, firm courage, high integrity, keen energy, and extraordinary aptitude for practical affairs. During

the course of his career there, he filled all the positions of honor and responsibility which were open to the most distinguished citizens: for many years he occupied a seat in the Council, a place to which only men of the greatest wealth, ability, and rectitude were raised; and for a considerable period also, he was the incumbent of the secretaryship of state, an office in the gift of the King. Tradition affirms that his loyalty remained so unshaken after the first Charles's death on the scaffold, that he made a voyage across the ocean in order to persuade Charles II, then at Breda, to allow him to erect the royal standard in Virginia.

The emigrant's son, also known as Richard, was trained in the London Inns-of-Court, and returned to Virginia to take the high place in the Colony's social and political life held by his father up to the time of his death. Inheriting a valuable estate; having acquired the most thorough education in law which England in that age afforded; and being equally remarkable for the astuteness of his intellect and the graces of his person, the second Richard Lee only followed in the footsteps of every young Virginian of that day in seeking and obtaining an office under the colonial government. For many years, he was a member of the Council, and in that influential position showed so much ability and public spirit, as to win Governor Spotswood's unstinted approval. "No man in the country," wrote that official, who enjoyed the best opportunity of correctly estimating the merits of the

principal citizens, "bore a fairer reputation for exact justice, honesty, and unexceptional loyalty." This Richard left a son of the same name, who lived and died in London; but all his children returned to America, one of them, Philip, settling in Maryland, where he became the progenitor of the prominent family of Lees who still reside in that state.

The most distinguished son of the second Richard was Thomas Lee, who long occupied the post of President of the Council, the third member of the family to fill in succession a seat at that board, and who, as its chief officer, served for some time, after the recall of Gooch, as the Governor of the Colony. He was in his day perhaps the most prominent citizen of the entire community; certainly not one exercised a more useful influence on the course of its affairs, or enjoyed the public esteem in higher degree. Nor are his claims to remembrance confined to the events of his own career, creditable to him personally, and beneficial to his country's interests as they were. If no honor were due him for his own public services, his name would be lifted from obscurity by the fact that he was the father of Richard Henry Lee, who, on June 10, 1776, offered in the Continental Congress the famous resolution declaring, "That these united colonies are and ought to be free and independent states"; of Francis Lightfoot Lee, who, with his more famous brother, Richard Henry, signed the great Declaration; and of Arthur Lee, who was associated with Franklin in the memorable mission to France.

But Thomas Lee has still another claim to distinction, which has an even more direct bearing on the subject of the present work;—he built that stately old Virginia manor-house, "Stratford," where Robert E. Lee was born, and which happily has survived all the vicissitudes of war and revolution. The original residence was destroyed by fire, and in erecting the present mansion, Thomas Lee was assisted by contributions from the East India Company and the Queen of England, a proof of the consideration he enjoyed in the highest quarters for his public services and private virtues.

Among the brothers of Thomas was Henry Lee, the grandfather of "Light-Horse Harry" Lee, and great-grandfather of General Robert E. Lee. "Light-Horse Harry," by his marriage with Matilda, a granddaughter of Thomas Lee, acquired possession of "Stratford."

It is seen from this brief account that, long before the Revolution, Robert E. Lee's ancestors, from generation to generation, had filled the highest posts in the Colony; that, during all that time, they had been conspicuous for integrity, ability, and zeal in the public service; and that their prominence in this sphere of activity was unsurpassed by that of any other family residing in Virginia. Nor was their influence wholly political. Scion of well-known English stock, as was the first Richard Lee, and himself possessed of so many accomplishments, and endowed with so many personal graces, his family, supported by the wealth he had brought

LIBRARY 261

over, took a high social position at once; and this position his immediate descendants maintained, not only by their talents, virtues, public services, and expanding estates, but also by repeated intermarriages with the Colony's most powerful families; such as, for instance, the Corbins, Grymeses, Blands, and Carters. It was due to these wide-spread genealogical ramifications that General Lee shared the blood that flowed in the veins of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Marshall, and Peyton Randolph.

The Lees, conspicuous as they were in colonial times, rose to even greater prominence during the Revolution. A fame previously based on local services alone now acquired a wider scope by the family's association with national events. It was Richard Henry Lee, known as the "American Cicero," from the surpassing graces of his oratory, who, as already stated, brought in the memorable resolution asserting the Colonies' freedom, and who, but for his wife's sickness calling him back to Virginia, would probably have been appointed chairman of the committee which drew up the Declaration, and as such assigned the duty of drafting that instrument. This celebrated state paper, the composition of a kinsman of the Lees through intermarriage with the Randolphs, was signed by two members of the family.

But it was in Henry Lee, father of the Confederate General, that the family, in these critical and tumultuous times, had its most distinguished and useful

representative. Tradition asserts that his mother had been loved by the youthful Washington, and that he had even celebrated her charms in verse. Whether this early passion was the real cause of his partiality for the son cannot now be decided ; it is more probable that the feeling was aroused by the dashing qualities of the handsome young officer, such as his perfect intrepidity and his love of daring adventure. Having graduated from Princeton College, where he acquired that literary skill which enabled him to write one of the most graphic of Revolutionary memoirs, Henry Lee was about to embark for London, in order to begin the study of law in Inns-of-Court, when news of Concord and Lexington arrived. Although but nineteen years of age, he threw himself into the contest with all the energy, ardor, and enthusiasm of his nature. Raising a company of troopers, a branch of the service irresistibly attractive to him, owing to his skill in horsemanship and his passion for rapid movement, he placed himself at their head, and joined Washington in the North, where he took part in numerous engagements. He was also present at the battles of Brandywine and Germantown ; and for his success in carrying out the hazardous enterprise of capturing Paulus Hook was rewarded by Congress with a highly laudatory medal.

It was in the Southern Department that Lee won his greatest reputation for boldness and celerity. That department had already been made famous by the reckless exploits of the partisan leaders, Marion

and Sumter; but "Light-Horse Harry," at the head of his legion, admitted to be the finest body of cavalrymen in the service, equaled those celebrated officers on their own ground in bravery and energy of movement while performing the most dangerous feats of arms. So much did he at all times burn with martial ardor that one of the most distinguished generals associated with him in the South spoke of him as one "who seemed to have come out of his mother's womb a soldier." Lafayette, watching his conduct in the field, heaped compliments on his head with French effusion; whilst General Greene, a man not given to profuse or lightly considered praises, described his part in one of these Southern campaigns as being superior in merit to that taken by any other officer of the army.

Emerging from the Revolution with a brilliant reputation for skill and daring, "Light-Horse Harry" Lee, as he continued to be known long after his military exploits had come to an end, survived to acquire an almost equally brilliant reputation for eloquence as a debater, and for wisdom in public counsel. Chosen as a member of the state convention of 1778, he, in the following year, was elected to Congress, and later became Governor of the commonwealth. It was at the request of Congress, after Washington's death, that he delivered the address containing the famous description of that great man "as first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." As a member of the Virginia Assembly of 1798–99, Lee was one of the

most active and zealous supporters of the celebrated resolutions touching states' rights which were passed by that body. "The Alien and Sedition Laws," he exclaimed during the debate, "are unconstitutional. Virginia has a right to object. Virginia is my country; her will I obey, however lamentable the fate to which it may subject me," a sentiment that reëchoed in the heart of his son sixty-one years later. Equally characteristic of that son was another utterance of the father. "No consideration on earth," he declared, "could induce me to act a part, however gratifying to me, which could be construed into disregard or faithlessness to this commonwealth." Nevertheless, his readiness to respond to a call of the national government when the public safety was in jeopardy was shown by his acceptance of the chief command of the expedition for the suppression of the Whiskey Insurrection in Pennsylvania, and also by the offer of his sword in 1812 to aid in the repulse of the British invaders.

Injured during a mob's attack on the residence of Mr. Hanson, the editor of the *Federalist Republican* (a paper published in Baltimore), with whom he happened to be stopping at the time, Lee never recovered, although he sought to restore his shattered health by a long sojourn in the West Indies. At last, in despair of any permanent improvement, he decided to return home; but the progress of his disease was so rapid that, during the northward voyage, he was forced to disembark at Cumberland Island, off the coast of Georgia. At this place, in an em-

bowering grove of magnolia, orange, olive, and live-oak, and hedged about by bosks of sub-tropical shrubbery, was "Dungeness," the beautiful home of his old comrade-in-arms, General Nathanael Greene, now being occupied by the latter's daughter, who received the invalid with all the tenderness which would have been shown by her father, had he been alive. Here under this hospitable roof, with his dying gaze directed through the open window of his sick-room toward the shores of that mainland, rising beyond the shining waters of the Sound, which his own exploits, many years before, had helped to make historic ground, Henry Lee breathed his last; and here in a corner of the island overshadowed by trees and perfumed by flowering plants, he was buried.

One of the most impressive scenes recorded in the life of General Robert E. Lee was the last visit which he paid to the grave of his father. This happened during the first year of the war, at the time when he was in charge of the defenses along that line of coast. "He went alone to the tomb," says the officer who accompanied him to the island, "and, after a few moments of silence, plucked a flower, and slowly retraced his steps, leaving the lonely grave to the guardianship of the crumbling stones, and the spirit of the restless waves that perpetually beat against the neighboring shore."

Such were some of the more immediate ancestors of Robert E. Lee on the paternal side. And these were only the most conspicuous representatives of

a wide and powerful family connection of the same name. Whether they filled seats in the Colonial Council, like the first two Richard Lees; or served as the President of that body or as Governor of the Colony, like Thomas Lee; whether they were members of the national Congress, like Richard Henry and Francis Lightfoot Lee; or sat in the Cabinet, like Charles Lee, Attorney-General under Washington; or served in both field and civil office, like Henry Lee, their public careers were marked by a conscientious and successful performance of every duty imposed on them by their respective positions.

The mother of Robert E. Lee, the second wife of "Light-Horse Harry," was Ann Hill Carter, of Shirley. The Carters, unlike the Lees, were unable to trace a distinguished lineage in England; nor had they, since their transplantation, produced many men conspicuous for talent and public service. But in Robert Carter, popularly known as "King Carter" from the vast area of his estates, the number of his slaves, indentured servants, and dependents, and his lordly deportment, the family could claim one of the most remarkable of those magnates of colonial Virginia, who, in the character of their possessions and surroundings, in their manner of life, their social tastes, political ambitions, and general disposition of mind, closely resembled the great English land-owners of that day. From this picturesque and commanding personality, who added to the influence of a very large fortune the power of

high official position, since he was, for many years, President of the Council, the various branches of the Carter family were descended. For generation after generation, they were able to retain and even to increase their property in spite of the size of their households and their bountiful hospitality. Several of the most ancient and famous of the colonial homes belonged to them, such as "Shirley" on the James River, and "Sabin Hall" on the Rappahannock. They had, in the course of two centuries, intermarried with members of all the principal families, and it was only a skilful genealogist who could unravel the skein of consanguinity uniting them with the Lees, Fitzhughs, Burwells, Beverleys, Pages, Randolphs, Harrisons, and a dozen other strains equally prominent in the social life of colony and state alike.

If the influence of a distinguished ancestry not infrequently shapes the descendant's character, equally strong must be the influence of an ancient homestead which recalls whatever was most beautiful, romantic, and inspiring in the social life of the past, or noblest and most impressive in the successive owners' careers. Robert Lee's childhood and youth were associated with perhaps the two most interesting colonial mansions of Virginia; namely, "Shirley" and "Stratford." He was born in 1807 at "Stratford," the home of his father in Westmoreland County, that county which had given birth to Washington, Richard Henry Lee, "Light-Horse Harry" Lee, and James Monroe; while in

the adjacent King George, James Madison had first seen the light. There exists nowhere else in the United States so small an area of country which has been so fertile in the production of celebrated men.

The old manor-house of "Stratford," a typical colonial residence of the highest class, was built with a solidity that seemed to assure its descending to the eldest son under the law of primogeniture for many generations. The partitions up to the height of the second story stood two and a half feet in thickness, and beyond that, two feet. Within these ample walls seventeen rooms were embraced, a number designed more for the gratification of hospitable tastes than for the needs of a large family. In addition, there was a spacious entry hall. From the roof, was plainly visible the broad expanse of the Potomac, reaching far up into the land; while across the stream rose the hazy and wooded shores of Maryland. Plantations of oak, cedar, and maple surrounded the house.

"Stratford" was one of the colonial homes which appealed so irresistibly to Thackeray's imagination during his visit to Virginia, and which led him to say that the history of Queen Anne's age could be more sympathetically and intelligently written under such a roof tree, with its crowding memories of the past, than under that of an English manor-house, even though of equal antiquity. It was just such a home as inspired *The Virginians*,—just such a home, indeed, as he makes Esmond reside in after crossing the sea.

Three generations of Lees had occupied "Stratford" before the birth of the family's most celebrated member. It was as if Robert Lee had come into the world in some old Shropshire manor-house where his forbears had first seen the light, lived, and died, one after another, during a long period of time. The room where he first drew breath was the one in which Richard Henry and Francis Lightfoot Lee, the Revolutionary patriots, had been born; and as he began to note surrounding objects, he observed on every wall portraits of famous statesmen and soldiers of his own blood; in every apartment, furniture invested with the charm of remote colonial associations; on every sideboard, silver plate and china of the like age; and on every bookshelf, English classics transmitted from the same distant times. All these varied objects spoke to his childish mind with equal vividness of the long descent of his family, and of its distinguished connection with the history of England, Virginia, and the United States; nor was the impression derived from the use of his own eyes the less deep because, with characteristic exaggeration, the old negro servants were, for his amusement and instruction, in the habit of descanting on the greatness of his family's past.

At an early age, Robert accompanied his parents to Alexandria, whither they removed to obtain for their children educational advantages not afforded in the country at that day. But there are many evidences that the boy, as he grew older, spent some

of his time each year at "Stratford." There still lingered in Westmoreland the habits and customs which the gentry had inherited from their English forefathers. General Lee, in later life, was fond of describing the ardor with which, as a youth, he engaged in open air sports: how he passed many hours in the chase, not infrequently on foot, and yet without fatigue, as he had become so inured to every form of rough exertion; how he acquired skill in horsemanship, which stood him in such stead as a soldier, by constant exercise on horseback unmindful of the weather; and how he cultivated an eye for topography by exploring field, wood, and stream. Doubtless, by these early diversions, he increased that natural vigor of constitution which enabled him, in the vicissitudes of his military career, to bear so many hardships, and to endure so many privations without apparent detriment to his health.

After the seizure of "Arlington" by the Federal government, and the conversion of its park into a national cemetery,—an act which would make it untenable as a private residence even if Mrs. Lee should recover possession of the property,—the General's mind turned fondly toward his birthplace, as a possible home for his family. "'Stratford,'" he wrote, in 1861, to a daughter who had recently been visiting the spot, "is endeared to me by many recollections, and it has always been the desire of my life to purchase it. And now that we have no other home, and the one we so loved has been forever desecrated, that desire is stronger with

me than ever. The horse-chestnuts you mention in the garden were planted by my mother. You do not mention the spring, one of the objects of my earliest recollections. How my heart goes back to those early days!" And a few weeks afterward, he wrote to his wife in the same strain: "In the absence of a home, I wish I could purchase 'Stratford.' That is the only other place I could go to, now accessible to us, that would inspire us with feelings of pleasure and local love."

Robert seems to have accompanied his mother whenever she visited her former home. There the various objects on the walls and about the quaint apartments recalled the history of her family as vividly as the like at "Stratford" recalled the history of his father's. "Shirley" was perhaps even richer in ancestral memorials than the old mansion on the Potomac, whether consisting of pictures, furniture, china, plate, or books. Among these pictures was to be observed the portrait, not only of "King Carter," but also of Alexander Spotswood, the great-grandfather of Robert's mother, that accomplished governor who had fought at Blenheim under Marlborough's eye, and had led the Knights of the Golden Horse-Shoe to the crest of the Blue Ridge to look down on the beautiful valley of the Shenandoah, then a verdant paradise for elk and bison. Through Spotswood, General Lee was a direct descendant of Robert Bruce. The great age of "Shirley," as well as the variety and unique character of its contents, all served to remind the

boy at that susceptible stage of his life of the distinguished part which his mother's family had played in Virginia's past. All the influences of the spot, like those of "Stratford," tended to increase his love of that free and active existence which had so long been led by the country gentry of his native state. Here were presented the same opportunities for the enjoyment of field sports; such as, pursuing the hare, deer, or fox; shooting partridges in the stubble, or duck and geese on the river; fishing in the creeks; rowing, walking and riding on horseback.

These early associations fostered in General Lee a thorough sympathy with all those feelings, habits, customs, and points of view that characterized the country gentleman of Virginia before the destruction of the old order. He himself was a perfect representative of the very noblest type of that extinct race of men,—a race simple and wholesome in tastes, dignified in bearing, courteous and hearty in manner, but proud and sensitive in spirit, and instinctively resentful of all unwarranted interference with their rights. He retained to the last his skill in horsemanship, his love of animals, his interest in trees and plants, his discriminating eye for landscapes, and his sound judgment in detecting the lay of ground, which served him so well in the course of his defensive campaigns. In a letter to one of his sons, he wrote that it did him "good to go to the 'White House,'" the home of General W. H. F. Lee on the Pamunkey, "and see the mules walking

round and the corn growing." And during the brief interval between his surrender at Appomattox and his acceptance of the presidency of Washington College, this longing to escape to the quiet and secluded occupations of country life breaks out again and again in his correspondence. "If I only had a little farm!" he repeats almost pathetically. Amidst the pressing cares and responsibilities of his collegiate position, he still hoped that his life would end as it had begun under the roof of his own country home, surrounded by all those objects and scenes that endeared such a spot to the hearts of the old Virginians. In his last years at Lexington, he was often seen, during his afternoon rides in the vicinity of the town, conversing with farmers at work in the fields about the growing crops and the prospect of a bountiful season.

Another characteristic of the old Virginia life was planted deeply in his nature by these early associations, a characteristic which, as we shall see, largely influenced his conduct at the most critical hour of his career:—no man felt a warmer interest in his relatives' welfare; no man recognized with more generous kindness all the claims of kinship, however remote. The reader of his correspondence is struck with the great number of persons whom he referred to as "cousin." No one in Virginia had more cousins than he, and no one cherished more sympathetically the tie of blood which bound him to this large circle.

If a deep love of all that was typical of the finer

aspects of life in his native state was first instilled into his mind and heart by the influences about him in his childhood and youth, that love, if it were possible, was made deeper yet by his marriage, and by his long association with that noble home which still looks down from the heights of Arlington. As the son of his father and mother, he shared in all that was most distinguished in the family history of the Old Dominion. If anything could have added further social prestige to a name already identified with such brilliant achievements in peace and war, it would have been a connection with the family who were the nearest representatives of Washington. Mary Custis, General Lee's wife, was the daughter of G. W. P. Custis, and Martha Washington's great-granddaughter by her first marriage. Her grandmother was Eleanor Calvert, of Lord Baltimore's family, and a descendant of the Lees of Ditchley, England. Mary Custis was her parents' only surviving child, and heiress to a large estate, including, among other valuable properties, the "White House," on the Pamunkey, where Washington and Mrs. Custis passed the first days of their married life. "Arlington," where she was born, and where all her early years were spent, was adorned with numerous portraits and contained many relics brought from Mount Vernon,—portraits and relics forever associated with Washington's fame and with the great events of the Revolution. The residence was built after a classical model, with large Doric columns in front supporting the weight

of the projecting roof. From its massive and stately portico, the spectator could see at a distance a wide expanse of the Potomac and the city of Washington, features and scenes recalling so much that was glorious or sacred in the career of "the Father of his Country." Beyond was a background of hills and forests. The house was embosomed in noble groups of trees, except where the lawn sloped gently to the fertile low-grounds along the river.

"Arlington" was General Lee's home down to the beginning of the war; here, with his family, he spent his time when he was stationed at Washington or was off military duty in the West. During this long interval, with the exception of the last two years, Mr. Custis was alive, and "Arlington" was the scene of the most refined and lavish entertainment. The high position of the Custis family as one of the oldest and wealthiest in the state, connected by marriage with Washington, and united by ties of kinship with all the prominent families of both Virginia and Maryland, threw around the spot an extraordinary social distinction. There survived in undiminished grace and beauty that social spirit, which, in early times, had given an unsurpassed charm to "Stratford" and "Shirley." "Arlington's" nearness to Washington enabled its hospitable owner to receive, not only the most eminent citizens of the United States, but also famous foreigners visiting the capital. Friends and relatives were always stopping in the house. After Mr. Custis's death, Colonel Lee, as executor, assumed

the management of the estate, and in this capacity showed the same delight in country pursuits and diversions that had always distinguished him. He did not disguise the keen pang which he felt in leaving this beautiful home when the war began. At its close, "Arlington" was hardly recognizable as the same spot. The shell of the house alone stood in its original stateliness, and its precious contents, so intimately associated with the fame of Washington, had been dispersed. The spreading groves had been cut down for fire-wood; while the graves of Federal soldiers, in silent rank upon rank, broke the sloping surface of the former verdant lawns.

CHAPTER II

FIRST MILITARY EXPERIENCE

THE perfect sobriety distinguishing General Lee throughout life was a conspicuous trait of his character even in early boyhood; then he was grave and sedate. His eleventh year had not been passed when his father wrote of him, "Robert was always good." Young as he was, he was the stay of his invalid mother. His brothers were now absent, one as a student at Harvard College; another as a midshipman in the Navy; while his father was still searching for health in the West Indies. Robert alone remained at home to watch over a parent who was so infirm as to require constant attention and assistance.

The influence of Mrs. Lee, a very intelligent and highly-gifted woman, upon the development of her son's character was deep and lasting. She taught him to practice constant self-denial, and sowed in his heart the seed of that faith in the beneficence of a Higher Power which afforded him through all the vicissitudes of his career the most unwavering comfort and support. She impressed upon him too the duty of sustaining with an untarnished honor the distinguished name which he had inherited. During her last years, he acted the part of both son and daughter to her: bought all the household supplies;

superintended in person the housekeeping; and saw that her horses were not neglected. One who knew him at this period of his life recorded that "discarding schoolboy frolics, he would hurry home from his studies to see that his mother had her daily drive; and might be seen carrying her to her carriage, affectionately arranging her cushions, and earnestly endeavoring to entertain her, and gravely asserting that, unless she was cheerful, she would derive no benefit from her airing. In her last illness, he mixed every dose of medicine she took, and he nursed her night and day. He never left her but for a short time."

So thoughtful a boy was certain to prove an exemplary student. Mr. Halliwell, one of his earliest instructors in Alexandria, said that Robert Lee "was never behindhand in his studies; never failed in a single recitation; was perfectly observant of the rules and regulations of the institution; was gentlemanly, unobtrusive, and respectful in his deportment to teachers and his fellow students," and that he imparted "a finish and neatness as he proceeded to everything he undertook." "One of the branches of mathematics he studied with me," remarks his old instructor, "was conic sections, in which some of the diagrams are very complicated. He drew the diagram on a slate; and although he well knew the one he was drawing would have to be removed to make room for another, he drew each one with as much accuracy and finish, lettering and all, as if it were to be engraved and printed."

These early traits as revealed in his relations with his mother and schoolmaster,—the eager yet patient tenderness toward the one, the almost excessive care in performing the tasks set by the other,—were characteristic of General Lee at every stage of his life. Of no one was it ever truer than of him that "the child is father of the man." But this sweetness of nature, this disposition to be obedient to just authority, was no indication of feminine weakness and softness, as was proven by the desire which he felt and expressed even in his boyhood to adopt the profession of arms. The selection of this calling was made by himself alone. Having completed his course with Mr. Halliwell, whose proficiency in mathematics had recommended him particularly to a youth aspiring to military honors, Robert Lee was introduced to President Jackson at the White House by Mrs. Lewis, the famous Nellie Custis of Mount Vernon, and the favorite of Washington, who was anxious to assist him in procuring an appointment to the Military Academy at West Point. The old hero, ever responsive to the claims of those whose names were associated with the martial glory of his country, and greatly pleased with the handsome appearance, manly bearing, and modest yet self-possessed manners of the youthful applicant, promptly acceded to the request. To that bent but eagle-eyed old man, the boy was no doubt of extraordinary interest as the son of an officer whose principal fame had been won in scenes closely identified with Jackson's early life. He

himself still bore on his person the scar of the wound inflicted by the sword of a brutal British trooper during that partisan warfare in which "Light-Horse Harry" had taken so bold and active a part. Lee's exploits were still recounted along with Sumter's and Marion's at every hearth in that Southern country which Jackson knew so well.

At West Point Academy, which he entered in his eighteenth year, Robert E. Lee was distinguished for the same correct behavior which had marked the whole of his previous life. During his entire course, extending over four years, his record was not blemished by a single demerit, evidence that, during all this time, he was guiltless of a single breach of the regulations, and in not a single instance had been neglectful of duty. That he did not forfeit the good-will of his fellows by his superiority to youth's usual infirmities was proven by his advancement to the position of corps-adjutant,—an office always filled by a cadet of commanding influence among his associates. His graduation near the head of his class disclosed that his intellectual power was fully in proportion to his moral excellence. He was at once appointed to the engineer corps,—composed of the first honor men of each graduating class, and in time of peace charged with the care of the fortifications erected for coast defense, or of forts to protect strategic points situated in the interior. Members were also frequently detailed to run state boundary lines, or

to superintend the clearance of the larger streams when obstructed by shifting sands or the accumulation of débris.

While still a cadet at West Point, Robert Lee became engaged to Miss Custis, whom he had known and loved from boyhood; but their marriage, which was celebrated at "Arlington" with all the festivities of the traditional Virginian wedding, did not take place until the second year after his graduation. At this period, he was the embodiment of masculine vigor and comeliness. One who saw him a few years before the happy event occurred has recorded her impression of his personal appearance: "The first time I remember being struck with his manly beauty and attractiveness of manner was when he returned home after his first two years at West Point. He was dressed in his cadet uniform of West Point gray, with white bullet buttons, and every one was filled with admiration of his fine appearance and lovely manners. I think he was about nineteen. During one of my visits to Arlington after my marriage, we were all seated around the table at night, Robert reading. I looked up, and my eye fell on his face in perfect repose, and the thought at once passed through my mind, 'You certainly look more like a great man than any one I have ever seen.' The same idea presented itself to me as I looked at him in Christ Church, Alexandria, during the same visit."

Lee, after his graduation, was stationed at Fortress Monroe, the oldest of all the national coast

defenses. It seems appropriate that his first assignment to active duty should have been in his native state, where his military career was to end. It is also a coincidence that his first year of service in the army of the United States should have been marked indirectly by an extraordinary incident similar in import to the one occurring in his last. It was during his stay at Old Point Comfort that the frightful massacre in Southampton County, near by, took place;—a massacre in which sixty white persons, including infants in arms, perished at the hands of the negro fanatic, Nat Turner, and his fellow conspirators. Lee was not detached to assist Colonel Worth in the suppression of the insurrection, but the terms of the letter which he wrote Mrs. Custis at the time show that its actual horrors, and what it portended, made a profound impression upon his mind. When nearly thirty years later he was ordered by the government to capture John Brown and his band of raiders, he was able, by his personal knowledge of the Turner uprising, to comprehend what the consequences of such an invasion would be, should Brown succeed in arousing the slaves against their masters.

Previous to the outbreak of the war with Mexico, Lee was engaged in performing the various duties incident to his branch of the service. He assisted in surveying and fixing definitely the boundary lines of Michigan and Ohio; in devising and superintending the erection of a system of dykes, by which the Mississippi, diverted from its old bed opposite St.

Louis, was thrown back permanently into its original channel; and finally, in strengthening the defenses of Fort Hamilton near New York. These different tasks were useful in perfecting his knowledge of the engineering art, and they also, by widening his information regarding his own country, gave him an opportunity accurately to estimate the comparative military resources of the Northern and Southern states.

But General Lee's first practical experience of actual fighting was to be acquired in a conflict which, though narrow in its field of operation, and less remarkable for the skill of those participating in it, than the War of Secession, was yet to constitute a most useful school for testing the capacity of officers, and also for increasing their military efficiency. The whole of Lee's after career was to turn upon the distinguished part which he played in the Mexican War, for it was the reputation won by him there that gave him so commanding a position at the opening of the War of Secession. It is not in place here to dwell upon the causes of the conflict with Mexico. An account of Lee's share in it is concerned only with its military aspects. After hostilities were declared, a definite plan of attack was concerted. It was really three plans in one: a large force was to be led by way of Matamoras on the Rio Grande into the very heart of Mexico; a second was to invade New Mexico and California; while a third was to descend upon the Northern Provinces. These three expeditions were to be

under the command of Generals Taylor, Kearney, and Wool respectively.

Lee was at first assigned to Wool's army, which, at a later date, was merged into Taylor's. As a captain of engineers, it was his duty, in coöperation with other members of his corps, to examine the ground on which it was proposed to establish a line of battle; to choose the positions where the artillery could be handled to the greatest advantage; and to make reconnaissances in order to secure accurate information for the guidance of the Commander-in-Chief in advancing or retreating. It was also the duty of the engineer corps to draft maps of the country through which the army was marching; to plan and overlook the erection of bridges for facilitating and hastening the progress of the troops; and to lead the way in the directions previously reconnoitred. Upon the prompt and capable performance of these various tasks depended the success of the larger military operations.

It was admitted at the time that no member of his branch of the service exhibited greater skill, sounder judgment, or more untiring energy in carrying out what was required of his corps than Captain Lee. It was in reconnaissance that he won his highest distinction. An incident which occurred during the time that he was under General Wool illustrates the courage and coolness displayed by him in dangerous situations while thus engaged. News was brought to Wool that Santa Anna, at the head of a force greatly superior to his own, had

secretly crossed the mountains, and pitched his camp not more than twenty miles away, with the intention of making a rapid, and it was hoped, unexpected, advance on the American army. It was of the first importance to discover whether the report was correct, and the task of finding this out, being full of risk, could be assigned only to an officer combining in himself great promptness, energy, and prudence.

Captain Lee was chosen and an escort of cavalry was ordered to meet him at a point situated outside of the picket line. Owing to some mistake, the proposed escort failed to appear at the appointed hour, and Lee, wishing to lose no time, accompanied by a single guide—a Mexican whose loyalty was assured only by fear of his companion's pistol—proceeded upon his hazardous enterprise. At the end of a ride of many miles, he observed a track, deeply indented with mules' hoof-prints and the ruts of wagon tires, leading straight toward the spot where it had been reported that the Mexican army had posted itself. Thinking that these might be traces of a recent reconnoitring party, Lee determined to push on boldly in the hope of obtaining more definite information. Night soon falling, he saw through the darkness what looked like a succession of camp-fires burning upon the flank of a low hill. Still unsatisfied, he rode on until he was near enough to detect what he took to be the tents of the enemy gleaming in the half light of the rising moon. Going still nearer to ascertain, if possible,

the size of the hostile force, he was much astonished to discover that what he had, in the obscurity, imagined to be tents was a large flock of sheep, and what he had supposed to be an army was a band of *vaqueros* having in charge a great number of wagons, mules, and cattle. Questioning them, he was told that Santa Anna had not yet crossed the mountains; and with this important information, he at once retraced his steps to the American headquarters. Although he had already ridden without an interval of rest a distance of forty miles, at the end of three hours, he returned with a large force of cavalry, and succeeded in ascertaining the exact position of the Mexican troops.

Amongst the seasoned officers withdrawn by Scott from Taylor's army to take part in the expedition against the city of Mexico by way of Vera Cruz was Captain Lee. He was at once assigned to the commanding general's personal staff. Thus began an association which led Scott to form what, previous to the War of Secession, appeared to be an almost extravagant estimate of Lee's military talents. The foundation of this exalted opinion was laid by the extraordinary skill and energy which the young Captain of Engineers displayed in the course of the siege of Vera Cruz. That city was protected by the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, after the Heights of Quebec, the strongest fortification then standing on the North American continent, without the reduction of which, no hope of capturing the town could be entertained. This fortress, armed with four

hundred guns, was garrisoned by five thousand veterans.

Early in March, 1847, Scott landed an army of twelve thousand men, and in a few days, had succeeded in drawing a cordon around the city. At the end of two weeks, the batteries erected by Captain Lee and the other members of the Engineer Corps were ready to begin the bombardment. When this opened, Smith Lee, an officer in the navy, was serving one of the guns which his brother had put in place, and which was very much exposed to the hostile fire. The whole battery was under the direct command of Captain Lee, and from one of his letters, we obtain a glimpse of what occurred there during the siege, and as to how he felt: "No matter where I turned," said he, "my eyes rested on Smith, and I stood by his gun when I was not wanted elsewhere. Oh! I felt awfully, and I am at a loss as to what I should have done had he been cut down before me. I thanked God that he was saved. He preserved his usual cheerfulness, and I could see his white teeth through all the smoke and din of the fire. I had placed three 32- and three 68-pound guns in position. Their fire was terrific and the shells thrown from our battery were constant and regular discharges, so beautiful in their flight and so destructive in their fall. It was awful. My heart bled for the inhabitants. The soldiers I did not so much care for, but it was terrible to think of the women and children."

After the surrender of Vera Cruz, which Scott,

in his official report of the operations, attributed largely to the engineering skill of Captain Lee, the American army, making that town their base of communication and supply, began their march upon the City of Mexico. In order to reach the capital, it was found necessary for the troops to cross a high range of mountains having a number of secondary ranges thrown out on both its eastern and western slopes. At Cerro Gordo, the first pass, Santa Anna had posted in what seemed an impregnable position a force of thirteen thousand men and forty-two pieces of artillery. The right of his line, which rested on a great rock rising perpendicularly from the cañon of a deep stream, was unassailable even by means of scaling ladders, while the left, also resting on a precipitous ravine, was equally protected from attack. An eminence towering above the main entrance to the pass was crowned with formidable batteries. The road from the plains reached this entrance by a series of zigzags following the turnings of a great ridge that gradually sank toward the sea until it melted away in the lowlands. Relying upon the extraordinary natural strength of his position, Santa Anna made no attempt to bar the advance of the American army as it slowly ascended this outlying eminence, but wisely reserved his troops for the moment when the assault should begin on the entrenchments in the pass. Before arriving at that point, Scott, recognizing the doubtful issue of a frontal attack, halted his men until reconnoitring parties had been sent to

find out whether the position could not be turned by a movement from behind. It was here that Captain Lee showed to an extraordinary degree that capacity for ascertaining with the eye the character of ground which had first been cultivated in him as a boy roaming about Virginian plantations. At the head of a band of pioneers, he, with great difficulty, made his way over the mountains to the enemy's rear, and then returning, reported the discovery of a line of approach which had escaped the Mexicans' notice.

On the following day, Captain Lee in person led Twiggs's division to the foot of a hill standing not far in front of the fortified crest of Cerro Gordo. The Mexican troops having been driven pell-mell from their position on this hill, the captors spent the whole of the succeeding night in placing on its top batteries with which to bombard the entrenchments on the heights beyond. When these batteries opened fire at sunrise next day, Captain Lee, with Riley's brigade, started to make his way at their head along the mountain path which he had discovered in his reconnaissance; his object was to plant the command athwart the Jalapa Road, the main highway running westward to the City of Mexico, and the principal line of the enemy's retreat in case of a disaster at Cerro Gordo. The movement was somewhat delayed by the necessity of cutting out a road for the passage of the artillery. While this was in progress, a storming party under the cover of the American batteries made a bold and determined

rush against the Heights of Cerro Gordo. The Mexican troops stationed there, hard pressed in front, and observing the movement to cut them off in the rear, soon abandoned their position, and retreated in such haste that their cannon, ammunition, and the greater proportion of their small arms fell into the Americans' hands.

That the energy and resourcefulness of Captain Lee had played a most important part in deciding the issue of the battle was fully acknowledged in his commanding officers' reports. General Twiggs stated that he had adopted all the young engineer's suggestions as to the advance against the hill in front of Cerro Gordo "with absolute confidence," and that his "gallantry and good conduct were deserving of the highest praise." Riley was equally eulogistic of the intrepidity shown by Captain Lee when the brigade, in moving forward under his guidance, was exposed to a heavy Mexican fire in the flank. These encomiums received the warm endorsement of General Scott.

After debouching from the Pass of Cerro Gordo, the American army advanced so slowly toward the City of Mexico that it was not until August when the top of the great chain of the Cordilleras was reached. The approaches to the capital from the east had been so strongly fortified that they were judged to be impregnable. The southern approaches were through a country more open, and more difficult for the enemy to defend; it was, therefore, decided to repeat the manœuvre of Cerro

Gordo on a far more imposing scale by an unexpected movement toward the south ; and from that point of the compass to make an assault on the city.

The obstructions to be surmounted were found to be greater than had been anticipated. Six miles from the capital, the enemy had planted batteries and stationed a large force at a point known as the Hacienda of San Antonio, which commanded the single road leading to the city from the south. At first, it seemed impracticable to turn this position, as the highway was bounded on one side by Lake Chalco and a deep morass, and, on the other, by the Pedrigal, a wild and abandoned tract covered with what was originally a stream of boiling scoriæ, which, in cooling into volcanic rock, had been compressed and contorted into myriads of rough shapes and sharp points. Apparently, the only way to cross this belt was by leaping from rock to rock, with a constant risk of impalement in case of a false step; and yet, unless the distance should be traversed by troops, the Hacienda must remain impregnable. Captain Lee volunteered to explore its intricacies in the hope that a careful survey would reveal the existence of a path. After a fatiguing search, he at last found one barely wide enough to accommodate the passage of a sure-footed mule, which led into the great highway forming the approach to the capital from the southwest. As this highway entered the southern road, it would afford a means of turning the position at San Antonio, if the

American troops and guns should be sent through the Pedrigal. Steps were at once taken to widen the mule track. When the task was completed, Pillow's and Worth's divisions, with Magruder's batteries, advanced; but on reaching the south-western highway, it was found that a force of six thousand Mexicans had taken possession of a hill overlooking the road in order to prevent an invasion from that direction. This position could be attacked only in front over very rough ground. By crossing an angle of the Pedrigal, the Americans succeeded in seizing the village of Contreras, and held it in spite of a succession of assaults by a force of Mexican cavalry and infantry.

When night fell, the situation of the American troops was full of danger. The remainder of the army was still stationed many miles away. Either Pillow and Worth would have to retreat under cover of darkness over the Pedrigal in order to rejoin their comrades, or those comrades would have to march over the Pedrigal by break of day to reinforce the position at Contreras. The retirement from the last-named point meant in all probability the loss of all the guns, as their transportation along that narrow, hazardous and newly-made road, even in the daytime, was full of perplexity. A violent tropical storm now arose, which, by increasing the darkness and flooding the ground, rendered a return of the artillery and a large body of troops impracticable. A council of war was held, and it was decided that an advance should be

made before daybreak with the object of turning the flank of the Mexicans posted on the hill and commanding the road to the southwest. This was considered to be the more imperative as news had arrived that large bodies of fresh troops were hurrying up to the enemy's support in anticipation of a renewal of the battle in the morning. It was of the highest importance, however, that the Commander-in-Chief should be informed of the intended movement, and this could be done only by a message sent over the Pedrigal, which, at this time, was made more difficult than ever of traversal by the intense darkness, the heavy fall of rain, and the slipperiness of the rocky path.

Captain Lee, who had advised the flank movement, volunteered to carry the message. It was necessary that he should start upon his perilous journey at once, as he must return by the same path before morning in order to report to Worth and Pillow Scott's plan of coöperation. When Lee set out, the rain was still falling in torrents, and the black pall of enveloping darkness was relieved only by the flashes of the tropical lightning. These flashes, and the high wind and flood of rain dashing against his face, were his sole guides. Unaccompanied by an escort, and unattended by even an orderly, he made his way across that intricate and desolate track of volcanic rock. In addition to the natural obstructions in his path, there was great danger that he might, at any moment, fall into the hands of the roving Mexican bands observed at a distance in the

fastnesses of the rock when the American troops had passed over. From this peril, he was saved probably only by the night's wildness discouraging all communication between the two wings of the enemy's army. Reaching Scott's headquarters in safety, after traversing a distance of five miles, Captain Lee delivered his message, and with a report of the Commander's plan, he returned to Contreras. Scott afterward pronounced this double passage of the Pedrigal "to be the greatest feat of physical and moral courage performed by any individual in my knowledge pending the campaign."

As soon as Lee arrived at Contreras, the troops under the guidance of the engineers advanced, and before daybreak, had established themselves at a spot five hundred yards in the rear of the Mexican entrenchments. At dawn, these entrenchments were carried at the point of the bayonet; the enemy fell back in confusion to Churubusco, which forced their comrades stationed at the Hacienda on the southern road to evacuate that position, as they were now threatened with an attack from behind.

At the battle of Churubusco, soon following, Lee rendered valuable services of several kinds. A central object of attack in this engagement was a fortified convent, which it was of the first importance to reduce. A simultaneous assault on the rear, right, and front of the position was concerted, and with that purpose in view, Pierce's brigade, under the leadership of Lee, who, a short while before, had been employed with Kearney's troop in

reconnoitring the neighboring entrenchments at Coyoncan, was now ordered to advance. Shields soon followed, and a sharp contest began. Being hard pressed, Shields dispatched Lee to Scott for reinforcements, and with the two fresh troops of Dragoons and the Rifles which he soon brought up, the fortunes of the day were restored, the Mexicans being once more compelled to retreat to a fortified position nearer the capital.

The commendation of Lee by his superior officers, after this battle, was as warm as it had been after Cerro Gordo and Contreras. General Percifer Smith reported that the young engineer's reconnaissances, although pushed far beyond the bounds of personal prudence, were yet conducted with so much skill that their fruits were invaluable; and that in all these operations, the soundness of his conclusions was as conspicuous as his personal daring. General Shields, after generously declaring that the position taken by him in the battle, which had assured the victory, had been assumed on the recommendation of Lee, expressed "the utmost confidence in his skill and judgment." Churubusco was followed by Molino Del Rey (September 8), and Molino Del Rey by the assault upon the heights of Chapultepec. Here Lee was wounded, and though eager to advance, was compelled by loss of blood to abandon all further participation in the attack. For two nights, he had been so closely occupied at the batteries that he had been unable to obtain any sleep.

With Chapultepec, hostilities virtually ceased.

During the war, Lee had steadily advanced in rank. For his services at Cerro Gordo, he had been rewarded with the brevet of Major, while for his services at Contreras and Churubusco, he was promoted to a Lieutenant-Colonelcy. Finally, he was gazetted as Colonel for his services at Chapultepec. He came out of the war with the reputation of being one of the ablest as well as one of the most gallant of his country's soldiers. Although he had not yet reached the grade of a general officer, the distinction won by him was so great that, when the Cuban revolutionary junta was seeking a leader, they made overtures to Colonel Lee as the man best suited for the position. No one was more deeply impressed by his meritorious conduct during the whole progress of the Mexican War than the veteran Commander-in-Chief, General Scott, a man fully capable of estimating military capacity. Reverdy Johnson, the distinguished lawyer, has recorded that, on more than one occasion, Scott, in his hearing, had declared emphatically, "that his success in Mexico was largely due to the skill, valor, and undaunted energy of Robert E. Lee." And to General William Preston, of Kentucky, he said that, "if he were on his death-bed, and the President of the United States should tell him that a great battle was to be fought for the liberty or slavery of the country, and ask him as to the Commander, he would say, with his dying breath, 'Let it be Robert E. Lee.'"

The high estimate of Lee's military abilities formed by all associated with him in the Mexican

War was not based upon mere partiality for the man because of his winning personal qualities. His services at Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, and Contreras especially, were marked by all those striking characteristics which won for him so much celebrity in the War of Secession; namely, quick perception, fertility in expedients, sound judgment, energy, audacity, and perfect intrepidity. The practical experience acquired in the Mexican campaign was of extraordinary advantage to him at a later period; and no less useful was the personal knowledge, which, by his participation in that campaign, he obtained of the capacity and disposition of the men whom he was afterward to confront in a far more momentous conflict. McClellan, Pope, Burnside, Hooker, Meade, and Grant were officers in the armies that invaded Mexico; the reputation of each was well known to him; and with several, he was on a footing of friendly acquaintance, if not of intimacy. His perfect familiarity with McClellan's characteristics especially proved to be a factor of controlling importance in his subsequent manœuvres against that antagonist.

Had the War of Secession broken out in 1851 instead of in 1861, Lee would probably have played an even more successful part in it; as he was, in the former year, ten years younger, in the full flush of mental and physical vigor, and perfectly fresh in his experience of active operations in the field. Had the campaign in western Virginia occurred then, instead of sensibly diminishing his distinc-

tion, it would perhaps have greatly advanced his reputation; as the obstructions to be surmounted resembled so closely those which he had overcome, with such conspicuous ability and energy, at Cerro Gordo and Contreras.

No soldier loaded with honors justly conferred on him ever received the tributes to his skill and valor more modestly than Colonel Lee. As far back in the course of the war as the close of the siege of Vera Cruz, in which he had taken so distinguished a part, he wrote to Mr. Custis, his father-in-law:— "I hope my friends will give themselves no annoyance on my account, or any concern about the distribution of favors. I know how these things are awarded, and how the President will be besieged by clamorous claimants. I do not wish to be numbered among them. Such as he can conscientiously bestow, I will gladly receive, and have no doubt that these will exceed my desert."

Colonel Lee did not allow the close of hostilities to relax his interest in his profession, although an excuse for doing so might have been found in the general ease in which the American army indulged after its arduous campaign, while occupying the City of Mexico before the conclusion of the treaty. It is related that, on one occasion during this interval, a brilliant assembly of officers, as the wine cup passed around, were discussing the different events of the march from Vera Cruz to the capital. One of the company, stirred by the story of that great achievement, arose and proposed the health

of the engineer, to whose unerring eye in reconnaissance so much of the success was due. Then, for the first time, it was observed that Colonel Lee was not present, and an officer was at once dispatched to find him in order that he might come and reply to the complimentary toast. After a long search, he was discovered in a remote apartment of the palace which served as the headquarters, deeply absorbed in drawing a map. The officer reproached him for his absence. "The earnest worker," so the account concludes, "looked up from his labors with a calm, mild gaze, which we all remember, and pointing to his instruments, shook his head. 'But,' said the officer impetuously, 'this is mere drudgery. Make some one else do it.' 'No,' was the reply, 'I am but doing my duty.'"

After the American army's return to the United States, the military duties performed by Colonel Lee, though not directly such as to prepare him for his career as a commanding general in the War of Secession, were yet not without influence on the part he then played. During the first three years following 1849, he was employed in strengthening the defenses of Baltimore against a marine attack, the third task of that nature which he had undertaken since his graduation at West Point. The first had been at Fortress Monroe, and the second at Fort Hamilton. The experience thus acquired was to become highly useful to the Confederacy when he was appointed to erect a fortified line along the seaboard of Georgia and the Carolinas, as a bulwark

against Federal invasion from the sea. His selection by the national government for work so important is a proof of his high reputation in the Engineer Corps of the army. It was said of him at this time by one fully competent to estimate his abilities in this branch of service, "that no officer of that corps had a quicker eye to grasp the military requisites of a situation, and to make the best possible provision for its defense." After leaving Baltimore, Colonel Lee, during three years, was superintendent of the Military Academy at West Point, a position which he filled with perfect satisfaction to the War Department, and to the marked advantage of the institution itself.

By the treaty with Mexico after the conclusion of hostilities, the vast region of country now embraced in the states or territories of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and California, was added to the Union. As nearly the whole of this district was inhabited by fierce and marauding tribes of Indians, it became necessary to increase the size of the standing army, especially in the cavalry branch, as promising the greater usefulness on the plains. An act of Congress, passed in 1855, authorized the addition of two regiments of horse. Jefferson Davis, at that time Secretary of War, in whose hands lay the appointment of officers for these two regiments, chose Colonel E. V. Sumner as commander of the first, and Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston as commander of the second; subordinate to Colonel Sumner was Brevet-Colonel Joseph E. Johnston, and to Colonel

Albert Sidney Johnston, Brevet-Colonel Robert E. Lee. The whole of Colonel Lee's previous military career had been confined to the Engineer Corps, but he was also fully competent for service in the cavalry arm; indeed, this entire arm did not contain a more graceful or accomplished rider, or one with a keener love for or more thorough knowledge of, a horse.

The second regiment was soon ordered to western Texas as the region most harried by Indian incursions. The tribes there consisted of Apaches and Comanches, names still synonyms of relentless cruelty and ferocity. The country to be patroled extended from the Arkansas River to the Rio Grande, and as far west as the boundaries of New Mexico, within which area the Comanches especially had been engaged, for generations, in pillaging the settlers; and hitherto it had been found impracticable to restrain their sanguinary and thievish instincts. A chain of forts occupied by infantry had proven quite ineffective, since the Indians, mounted on their fleet horses, and moving only under cover of darkness, had been able to slip through without difficulty, and repeat their depredations at will. It was thought that these outrages could be stopped by cavalry operating in the gaps between the forts.

Colonel Lee's services on the Texan border began in April, 1856, in which year he was stationed at Camp Cooper, on the Brazos River, in command of the first and fifth squadrons. His duties were not congenial to his tastes, though performed by him

with his usual conscientiousness. In the first place, the whole country was a dreary and practically uninhabited prairie, without a line of railway or telegraph. The only means of obtaining the mails was by armed soldiers riding on mules at a gallop; and several weeks always passed before a letter could reach family or friends in the East, and a reply be received. It required several days even to communicate with the military headquarters at San Antonio. When the officers traveled from post to post, they were conveyed in ambulances accompanied by a strong escort. The social life of these posts was necessarily uneventful and bare of interest, as at each the force was composed of only one or two companies of common soldiers, with a few officers.

The chief military duty consisted of scouting, which was performed generally by detachments of about twenty men under the command of subalterns. It was during only a part of the year that this operation was enlivened by danger; in winter, the Indians rarely left their reservations, but as soon as antelope and bison began to grow fat on the new prairie grass in the spring, they deserted their wigwams and spread over the country, ready to shoot from some secret ambush the first settler or soldier who approached their hiding place unawares. They were very skilful with their weapons, and very daring riders, but thievish and murderous. "The poor creatures," Colonel Lee is reported as saying, "are not worth the trouble they give to man and horse." Notwithstanding his distaste for the task

of restraining the savages, he was absent from his post, during this part of his career, on but one occasion. When Mr. Custis died, having been named as his executor, he returned to "Arlington" on furlough; but before many weeks had passed, he had resumed his duties in Texas, to the command of which Department he had been promoted in succession to Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston, now engaged in the Mormon campaign in Utah.

CHAPTER III

LOYALTY TO VIRGINIA

DURING the many years that Lee had been performing his duties as an army officer with so much distinction, the causes of difference between the people of the North and South had been steadily growing in bitterness. Suddenly, and unexpectedly to himself, he was brought face to face with a very startling manifestation of that antagonism, echoes of which had previously reached him only from a great distance while he was actively employed in military service.

It happened that in October, 1859, Colonel Lee was off duty at "Arlington," having obtained a furlough, as already stated, in order to settle up Mr. Custis's estate. News came to the War Department that John Brown, of bloody notoriety in Kansas, accompanied by a band of raiders, had crossed the Potomac, seized the national arsenal at Harper's Ferry, and from that point, by arming the negroes, was seeking to spread the horrors of a slave insurrection throughout the Southern states. Prompt and decisive action was required. An order was at once sent to Colonel Lee to take command of a squad of marines procured from the Navy Yard at Washington, and to proceed to Harper's Ferry. On ar-

riving there, he found that Brown, who had succeeded in capturing several well-known citizens of the town and its neighborhood for use as hostages, had been driven by the local militia behind the walls of the armory engine-house. Posting his troops in a cordon about the building, Lee directed Captain Stuart to approach the door with a flag of truce and to demand the surrender of the entire band. Brown boldly replied that, should he be attacked, he would kill his prisoners on the spot. "Don't mind us; fire," exclaimed Colonel Washington, one of the prisoners, as soon as he heard these words. At a signal from Captain Stuart, the marines made a sudden rush for the door, and quickly battering it in, besides releasing every hostage unharmed, killed or mortally wounded all the party except four. John Brown himself escaped injury. He was delivered to the civil authorities, tried, and hanged.

Such was the prompt and complete extinction of a little flame which was designed to create a conflagration from one end of the South to the other. No record has survived of the impression left on Colonel Lee's mind by the Brown invasion, or by the purpose its leader had in view; but there is no reason to doubt, from the thoughtfulness of his character, that, as he returned to "Arlington," he pondered deeply and sadly on the terrible significance to the Southern people of that apparently small event. It recalled the Turner insurrection, which had occurred in a neighboring county when he was stationed at Fort Monroe as a young officer.

He knew that, had Brown had his way, these atrocities would have been repeated from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, and from the Ohio to the Gulf. Was his act, the act of a single madman representing nobody but himself and his misguided followers, or was it symptomatic of a general feeling in the North of hostility toward the Southern people? Had Colonel Lee never before speculated as to what the antagonism between these two sections would lead in the end, the part that he was called upon to play in Brown's capture must have brought before his mind a dismal picture of the future.

The most fateful moment of Colonel Lee's life was now approaching. What were the influences moving him to cast in his lot with the Southern people as soon as they decided that the hour had arrived when they were justified in withdrawing from the Union? In order to understand the general influences governing him as a single individual in taking that step, we must understand those governing his people as a whole. Their reasons have been often told, but cannot be too often reiterated if their motives are to be weighed in the balance.

In a general way, it may be said that the citizens of each Southern state firmly believed that, in their collective capacity, they had a constitutional right to secede whenever they concurred that their interests were in jeopardy. It was this right and not their right of revolution, inherited from the fathers of 1776, which they asserted in the secession con-

ventions. When the Constitution was adopted, at least four of the states, namely, South Carolina, Virginia, New York, and Massachusetts, expressly reserved the right to withdraw from the Union under provocation. Massachusetts was the first that threatened to exercise this right through the voice of the Hartford Convention; South Carolina did exercise something not unlike it, in 1831, in adopting an act of nullification. No clause was inserted in the Constitution by the framers which either declared the sovereignty of the nation or proclaimed the right of secession, but that instrument reserved to the states all rights not expressly delegated to the central government. The Southern people affirmed that secession was the most important of these reserved privileges, because its existence was absolutely necessary to prevent the national government from becoming a despotism like the one overthrown in 1783; that in recognizing the thirteen Colonies in the Treaty of Paris, King and Parliament had declared each by name to be "free, sovereign and independent"; that the creators, the states, must, in the nature of things, be greater than the creature, the Union; that two of the states for some time had declined to enter the Union, and no one for a moment had questioned their sovereignty during that interval; and finally, that the Constitution, in tacit recognition of state sovereignty, contained no clause authorizing the general government to coerce a state.

According to the Southern view, each state was a

member of the Union, but the people were citizens of their respective states. The individual citizen bore no relation to the United States,—the only relation was between the United States and communities known by the names of the separate states. It followed that the individual Southerner's allegiance was due only to his native or adopted state, and that if he refused to acknowledge this allegiance, he was guilty of treason. Dissolution of the compact between the state and the United States served instantly to release from the obligations of their oaths all citizens of each state who were employed in the civil or military departments of the central government.

Why was it, as time passed, that the North as a whole gradually adopted the theory of an indivisible Union, while the South remained loyal to that theory of a divisible Union, should just reason arise, which had at first been almost universally held by the people of North and South alike? The explanation is to be found in a steady and continuous divergence of their respective economic interests.

At the end of the Revolution, the population of all the former Colonies was practically homogeneous; and they had been further unified by their sacrifices in support of a common cause. Every state at that time, in one form or another, was interested in the institution of slavery:—the Southern and Middle States as owners of slaves; the states of New England as importers from Africa or the West

Indies. By the date set for the abolition of the slave trade (1808), all the New England states had liberated their slaves, and measures were maturing for the emancipation of those still held in the Middle States. There were no great staples produced north of Maryland to make negro bondsmen's labor in the field peculiarly profitable; nor was the climate such as to encourage their substitution for white men as better adapted to endure exposure to the summer heats. Agriculture was very generally carried on there by white yeomen, who needed no assistance in tilling their little estates; and side by side with them, there sprang up a great number of small artisans, who were not likely to regard slave competition with tolerance. Very soon a large variety of manufactures were established, and these prospered and expanded, while commerce grew increasingly lucrative.

As slaves had never been numerous in the Northern states, the stability of no great interest there was jeopardized by their emancipation; no large amount of property was confiscated in liberating them; and no dangerous population was admitted as freemen to a community with which it would be impossible for them to amalgamate. In abolishing slavery, the Northern people were able to yield to the new spirit of the age without the slightest detriment to their prosperity. When the institution disappeared from that part of the Union as the result of economic and democratic, not moral, influences (for a large proportion of the Northern slaves were

sold in Southern markets before the day appointed by their native states for their emancipation arrived), the North was in a condition to attract a host of European emigrants to its different communities. The growth of the Northern and Western states in wealth and population between 1820 and 1850, in consequence of the diversification of employment and the inflow of sturdy and industrious aliens from oversea, forms, from some points of view, the most extraordinary chapter in our history. Constituting as they did either manufacturing communities dependent for their prosperity on the existence of a tariff passed by Congress, or agricultural communities compelled to look to the central government for the building of railways and canals to carry their products to the Atlantic ports, it was only natural that they should have been pervaded by a vivid sense of the practical advantages of nationality. This feeling was simply the highest form of that co-operative spirit which manufacturing interests always encourage in a people; and it was further strengthened and extended in its scope by the presence of a vast foreign-born population, who, in their native countries, had always been accustomed to look up to a paternal centralized government. The Western states were settled for the most part by Europeans, who, at their arrival, and even long afterward, considered the United States, and not their adopted states, to be their home. These states had been simply territorial divisions a few years before, and even in the eyes of their citizens of

American birth possessed no history to create and foster local pride.

It was Webster, who, in his memorable debate with Hayne, expressed that new view of the Union and the Constitution which had gradually arisen among the Northern people, as their complex and rapidly expanding economic interests became increasingly dependent upon the central power for the maintenance of their present prosperity and its enlargement in the future. By the interpretation of that celebrated statesman, who was but the mouthpiece of his section, the Constitution was a living, growing organism, a vehicle of life like the Constitution of Great Britain; not rigid and inflexible, but an instrument adaptable to the changing conditions of a people, who, by the forces of their internal growth, unforeseen by their fathers in the early years of the republic, were united beyond all possibility of legal separation.

Hayne, in combatting these statements, expressed the view which had once been held by the bulk of the people in North and South alike, and which was still held by the Southern people because the character of their interests had undergone no change. The Southern population, which was almost entirely native, hardly increased owing to the volume of the annual outflow of its own citizens. Each succeeding generation did not differ substantially from the preceding because the institution of slavery kept the framework of Southern society practically fixed and unalterable. There were few manufactures, few

towns, and no variety of manual employments. Agriculture was the single interest of importance, and ample labor for the ground was supplied by African bondsmen. There was no room and no demand for foreigners in the tobacco and cotton fields. At one time, the Southern people had hoped to keep step with the Northern in economic expansion and diversification ; and this led them for a time to favor a moderate tariff, but their expectations proved futile and baseless. They soon found themselves in the position of men who were sapping their own resources in order to pay tribute for the advancement of Northern industries.

In consequence of this stationary economic system, no influence arose to lead the Southern people to modify or alter their original view that the Constitution was and had always been a rigid and inflexible instrument. On the contrary, as early as 1831, there started into existence a new influence which made the people of the South more loyal than ever to that view, as it seemed to be their only bulwark against the possible aggressions of the changing North. In that year William Lloyd Garrison, in spite of the Constitution's expressed guarantees, began his memorable crusade, in which he denounced slavery as such a "damnable crime" that it should be abolished without compensation to the owners of the negroes, notwithstanding the different example in this respect recently set by the English government in the West Indies. Up to this time, the opinion had prevailed very generally

in the Southern states that slavery was an evil and its existence was to be lamented. But there were at least three reasons, all having their root in practical good sense, which had caused even the most eager of Southern advocates of emancipation to hesitate.

First, the value of the slaves between 1830 and 1860 ranged from one to two if not three thousand millions of dollars. There were practically but three forms of property in the Southern states before the great war; namely, land, negroes and live stock. To destroy the right of property in negroes was to destroy at least one third of the accumulated wealth of the South. In demanding emancipation without compensation, the Abolitionists were advocating a policy that would not impose on them the loss of a single cent, but would deprive the Southern people at one stroke of one third of their then available capital. Such a sacrifice in the cause of pure philanthropy was never made by any people, however enlightened, in the whole course of human history.

Secondly, the loss of capital invested in slaves was not all that would follow from emancipation; agriculture was thought to be entirely dependent in a large part of the Southern states on negro labor. The result of emancipation in Jamaica seemed to show that the black man would lose his industry in a state of freedom. Land would, therefore, immediately decline in value, and the few remaining pecuniary interests of the South would, in sympathy,

inevitably shrink also. In other words, there seemed to be just reason to think that for the bulk of the Southern people emancipation would mean a condition of affairs that would fall little short of modified bankruptcy, a prospect that men are not disposed to face with equanimity even when consoled by the approval of those who themselves have suffered no loss.

Thirdly, slavery was not wholly an economic system. The institution, having been in existence since the foundation of the country, was inextricably interwoven with the whole social life of the Southern people ; to make an end to it, was to destroy a social fabric consecrated by all their historical memories, domestic traditions, and intimate personal affections. Indeed, the working of habit and custom through two centuries and a half made it hard for them to conceive of their ability to live under a different order.

Finally, should the slaves be liberated, what would be their new status in the community? There could be no social amalgamation of the white and black races without the disappearance of the white ; there could be no common enjoyment of political rights without the degradation, if not the destruction, of all the foundations of order. The permanent social and political subordination of the freedman would, therefore, be of paramount importance ; but could any country hope to flourish which numbered among its inhabitants millions of emancipated Africans, who were naturally averse to labor,

and who, by withdrawal from the personal influence of their former masters, would tend to sink back, as had the negroes of Jamaica and Hayti, into their original state of barbarism?

The situation was one full of perplexity to those who had to meet in a practical way the problems which it raised. In spite of the difficulties that would attend and the dangers that would follow emancipation, there seems now no room for doubt that ultimately Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, Tennessee, North Carolina, and perhaps Arkansas, in their eagerness to share in the North's abounding prosperity, would have freed their slaves had not the intemperate spirit of the Northern Abolitionists provoked a strong revulsion of feeling. Just about the time when Garrison began to advocate emancipation without compensation, the legislature of Virginia, after a long debate, failed only by a few votes to pass a bill granting freedom to the slaves. Had she set the example, the states contiguous to her boundaries would have followed, and in the end even the cotton states would have been forced, by their isolation, to adopt the same policy. As the Northern Abolitionists grew more numerous, zealous, and abusive, the sentiment in favor of emancipation declined even among the people of the Border States, although they saw clearly enough that they had no real interest in the maintenance of the institution, since the inter-state slave trade benefited only a small proportion of their citizens.

Why did that sentiment weaken in consequence of the Abolitionists' attacks? First, the independent life which the Southern people led on their plantations, and their supreme control of many slaves, had made them extraordinarily proud and high-spirited, quick to resent dictation, and slow to brook interference from the outside with their domestic affairs. Had they yielded it would have appeared to them like an acknowledgment of the truth of the Abolitionists' charges, and an ignominious surrender. Secondly, as the safety of their domestic institutions had been guaranteed by the Constitution, an assault on slavery was really an attempt to subvert the national as well as the local law. Thirdly, the propaganda of the Abolitionists was of a character to incite a slave insurrection, the very greatest calamity that could fall upon a Southern community. And fourthly, the Southern people were deeply wounded by the unjust and indiscriminate aspersions cast upon their social life. They knew that they were no more responsible for the existence of slavery in the United States than the people of New England, who had been not only slaveholders themselves, but also the chief carriers in the wretched traffic in human flesh and blood. This fact alone the Southern people thought should have made that part of the North at least more considerate and temperate in weighing the perplexities of the South's position in its relation to an institution less difficult to retain than to abolish.

So far from such a feeling being shown, the spirit

of the North as represented in many of its greatest speakers, and nearly all its greatest writers,—Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier and Emerson, to name only the most eminent,—was all directed, with extraordinary zeal, toward blackening the reputation of the Southern people, and holding them up to the reprobation of the civilized world. From platform and pulpit, men who knew by practical observation as little of the South as they did of Central Asia,[1] were denouncing its people for inflicting systematically and continuously every form of atrocious cruelty and bitter suffering on the slaves, although associated with them from childhood in every hour of joy or sorrow. Looking at slavery in the abstract, they made no allowance for the softening influence of habit, custom, and public opinion; they refused to credit the Southern people with having lifted the negro, in disposition, manners, and conduct, very far above the level of the contemporary savages of Africa. They even denied that the same selfish instinct which, in the absence of a higher motive, discouraged the slaveholder from maltreating his horses and cattle, would also discourage him from maltreating his slaves; and that, if lacking in ordinary humanity, fear of retaliatory insurrections would stay his hand from cruelty.

[1] The following extract from the memoirs of the late Lord Houghton (Monckton Milnes) reveals how little real knowledge even the greatest of the Abolitionists had of the true character and capacity of the Southern negro :—" London, June 27, 1867, Garrison told us that, in a few years, the blacks would be the sovereign race in the Southern states in wealth, intelligence and power."

Shrinking from the economic ruin, social decline, and political disorder which might follow the emancipation of millions of bondsmen; fully conscious that, as a body, they had made every sacrifice to ameliorate the condition of their slaves; and feeling that there was no just reason why they should be charged with being less humane or less moral than the Northern people, was it strange that the people of the South should have bitterly resented the attack upon their society launched by Mrs. Stowe in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a novel which, taking what slavery sometimes led to, presented it as a picture of what it always was; pushing forward as the universal rule what was, in reality, the exception? Before the end of twelve months, a million and a half copies of this book had been sold among English-speaking peoples all around the globe. It had been translated into all civilized languages, and had been acted upon the boards of many theatres. The Southern people, for continuing to retain an institution which, not very many decades before, had been held by every branch of their race in America, were made the target of a chorus of reproaches coextensive with the world.

The form which the next assault took seemed to them the legitimate result of the indirect teachings of Mrs. Stowe's book,—namely, the substitution of the pike and gun for pen and voice. Had John Brown succeeded in the object of his invasion, not a countryside in the Southern states would have been without its Cawnpore; not one would have escaped

those scenes of atrocious cruelty and bestiality which made the revolution in Hayti one of the most appalling events in the world's history. Startling as Brown's act was in itself, it seemed to the South to acquire a much more alarming significance by the disclosure of the fact that the expedition had had the moral support of men of such high standing in the North as Gerrit Smith, the wealthy philanthropist; Theodore Parker, the famous preacher; Dr. Samuel G. Howe, the enthusiastic humanitarian; Thomas W. Higginson, poet and pastor; Stearns, a well-known man of business of Boston; and Sanborn, a young man of fortune recently graduated from college,—a body of citizens distinctly representative of the best culture of the Northern communities.

It might easily have been predicted that the Southern people, keenly resentful of the strictures made upon their character and society, would soon move from a passive attitude to one of aggressive defense. But for these strictures, which began in earnest in 1831 with the appearance of Garrison, the acrimonious struggle for the territories would probably never have taken place. The South readily consented to the guarantee of free labor for the Northwestern Territory because at that time there was no interference with her own domestic institutions; and had there continued to be none, this spirit would have undergone no change. It was not simply thirst for slavery's extension which led the Southern people to assert so vehemently, and ap-

parently so unwisely, a claim to the new regions in the West thrown open to settlement; it was rather an unerring instinct, in the light of what had gone before, that their only safety lay in maintaining their numerical equality in Congress, which was possible only by securing at least a share in the new territories. Jefferson Davis, in a speech delivered in the Senate in 1858, spoke but the truth when he said that the South presented "a new problem, the problem of a semi-tropical climate, the problem of malarial districts. This produces a result different from that which would be found in the farming districts and cooler climates. A race suited to our labor exists there. Why should we care whether they go into other territories or not? Simply because of the war that is made against our institutions; simply because of the want of security which results from the action of our opponents in the Northern states."

Goaded on by the fears as to her own safety that the growth of the Abolition sentiment in the North raised, the South was led to take two steps which she would not have done had she been calm enough to act wisely: she demanded a more stringent Fugitive Slave Law; and she approved the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, the virtual overthrow of the Missouri Compromise. Naturally enough, the Northern people revolted against the task of hunting down Southern slaves; and naturally enough too, they were opposed to slavery's extension over the virgin prairies of the far West. The

South simply played into the hands of the Abolitionists. Her aggressively defensive action led to the creation in the North of a new party, which, animated by the same ruthless spirit as its opponent, took a position, not only openly in contempt of a recent decision of the highest court in the land, but also by inference in denial of the principle of local self-government. When the Republican party proclaimed that it had no intention of interfering with slavery where already existing, the Southern people simply did not believe it, for they thought they foresaw clearly enough the logical result of Mr. Seward's assertion of the "higher law," and of Mr. Lincoln's statement that slavery should be placed "where it would be in course of ultimate extinction."

South and North, mutually aggressive and defiant, had reached a point where they had lost all faith in the honesty and justice of each others' intentions. The North was convinced that the South was seeking to force the institution of slavery on her free communities; the South that the North aimed not only to abolish that institution in the Southern states, but in striking this blow, to destroy the right of local self-government there; and furthermore, by concentrating all power at Washington, to erect in the national capital the centralized tyranny which Southern statesmen had dreaded from the beginning. Such was the melancholy condition to which the sentiment of Abolition without compensation, or without consultation with the

slaveholders, advocated for the first time by Garrison, had brought the country!

In going to war, the Northern and Southern people laid on the sacrificial altar of their country ten thousand millions of treasure (five times the value of all the slaves), and the bodies of nearly one million men who perished by the sword or disease. Had the North foreseen all this, would she have undertaken the conquest of the South? Would she have undertaken it, had she not been misled by the false impression that, should war break out, the slaves would rise against their masters; and that the poor whites, because they owned no negroes, would decline to support the great slaveholders who had brought about secession? Both expectations showed how ignorant were the Northern people of the conditions really prevailing in the Southern states. The slaves as a whole, so far from having been treated with cruelty, as alleged by the Abolitionists, had experienced so much kindness that the war only made them cling with the greater loyalty to their masters' families, and, with the greater fidelity, serve as their defenders and comforters in the absence of all the able-bodied white men in the Confederate army. The poor whites favored secession even more ardently than the slaveholders, for emancipation, in their eyes, meant simply that they would be reduced to social and civic equality with the freedmen. Under the existing system, they at least enjoyed the distinction of being both free and white, however indigent. It was only in the moun-

tains of west Virginia and east Tennessee that this class was disaffected to the Confederacy, and there merely because no negroes were to be found in such remote and primitive regions.

The Southern people, in the exercise of what they considered to be their indisputable right, withdrew from the Union because they believed that, by the party in power, which was purely sectional, and certain to grow in strength, they would be deprived of all the safeguards of the Constitution; that, in time, their slaves, forming one-third of their wealth, and upholding all the values represented in their economic system, would be emancipated without compensation to their owners, and placed upon a footing of political equality with the whites, to the confusion and degradation of the Southern states; that, by the adoption of these measures, the right of local self-government, the only bulwark, in their opinion, of the liberty of the individual, and peculiarly dear to them from its long enjoyment, would be taken away from them; that a far higher tariff would be imposed on them, which would make the purely agricultural South pay a tribute heavier than ever to the industrial North; and finally, that they would have to submit to the humiliating domination of the very men who, for years, had persistently calumniated them as inhuman, immoral, and criminal. No doubt, these convictions were deeply colored by passion, but that they were sincerely entertained, is incontrovertibly proven by the extreme step which they led the Southern people to take.

What was the attitude of Virginia after the announcement of Mr. Lincoln's election? Unlike the seven cotton states, which, one after another, left the Union, Virginia refused to regard that election as in itself a justification of secession. The convention which she summoned to decide upon that fateful question, declared, by a very large majority, in favor of remaining under the Federal government. "Better for the South to fight for its rights within the Union than out of it," was the prevailing sentiment. In spite of the recent invasion of the state by John Brown, the most influential citizens of Virginia believed that the apprehensions of the cotton states were very much exaggerated; and they endeavored by the Peace Conference to stay the tide of secession. Had Virginia followed the far South's example by withdrawing from the Union before Mr. Lincoln's inauguration, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas at once would have taken the same step; above all, Maryland, for at that time, this commonwealth would have been free to act, and Washington would have fallen under the Confederacy's control, becoming the Southern capital.

But Virginia's reluctance to secede was based on other reasons besides those urged by practical expediency. It was in great measure sentimental. Through Jefferson, she had been largely instrumental in declaring the independence of America; through Washington, in winning that independence by the sword; through Washington and Madison,

in establishing the national government by the drafting and adoption of the Constitution; through Marshall, in consolidating that government by a liberal interpretation of its powers; through Jefferson again, in doubling the area of the United States by the Louisiana purchase; and through Generals Scott and Taylor, in extending that area to the Pacific coast from Oregon to the Gulf of California. These were proud recollections, and they created bonds too strong to be lightly broken.

Virginia cannot be charged with seceding in the hope of aiding in the foundation of a great slave empire; she left the Union only when called upon, contrary to what she believed to be all constitutional right, to assist in the coercion of her sister states in the South,—states to which she was bound by far more intimate social and political ties than to the states of the North. She was fully aware that the overwhelming majority of her citizens had no real interest in any form in the perpetuation of slavery; and for the institution itself she entertained no great love. Her action was unselfish and chivalrous in the extreme, for all men knew that, if she should join the Confederacy, her soil would at once become the principal battle-ground, and be devastated by the march of contending armies.

As soon as Virginia passed her ordinance of secession, all factions at once disappeared, and her sons, seeing the imminent peril of her position, flocked from all sides to her defense. Especially was this the case with those who held commissions in the

navy and army of the United States. Among the most distinguished of these was Robert E. Lee.

What were the particular motives leading Colonel Lee to take this momentous step? Was he influenced by self-interest touching his property? "Arlington," his home and principal estate, was situated almost in gunshot of the Federal capital, and the heights on which it stood were certain to be seized at once by Federal troops for the defense of the city on its most exposed side. Fortified lines would be drawn, and inevitably the estate would pass under military control, to the destruction of everything on it but the soil which gave it an agricultural value. The residence itself could not escape occupation. Lee clearly foresaw that, in abandoning the mansion, it would be left open to depredation, if not to destruction. It was a home that was profoundly endeared to every member of his family. Its stately architectural beauty, incomparable situation, and noble outlook and environment; its identification with General Washington through the presence of so many priceless relics, as well as with the honored Custis name; its association with the sacred memories of Colonel Lee's own married life, and the early lives of his children,—all served to lacerate his heart in abandoning it, in all probability forever, to the intrusion of rude soldiers, to have its treasured contents dispersed, its encircling groves cut down, and every beloved surrounding feature obliterated or desecrated.

In a letter to his wife, dated May 11, 1861, after

dwelling on these forebodings, he closed with the words: "God's will be done. We must be resigned." And again a few days later: "I fear we have not been grateful enough for the happiness there within our reach, and our Heavenly Father has found it necessary to deprive us of what He has given us. I acknowledge my ingratitude, my transgressions, and my unworthiness, and submit with resignation to what He thinks proper to inflict on me."

If Colonel Lee had been simply unwilling to take up arms against the South, it was in his power to resign his commission in the Federal service and to retire to "Arlington," there to pass the remainder of his life unmolested. In casting in his lot with Virginia, he exposed himself to the chance of becoming a houseless wanderer on the face of the earth.

Nor could any expectation of preserving his right of property in his slaves have influenced Colonel Lee in his decision to join the Confederacy. He had already emancipated the few negroes he had inherited, and by the terms of Mr. Custis's will, all those held by Mrs. Lee as a part of her father's estate were to be liberated at the end of the first five years following his death. This date fell in 1862, at a time when General Lee was actively engaged in one of the most arduous campaigns of the whole war. As his father-in-law's executor, it was his duty to see that the instructions of the will were duly carried out. Not permitting the

other claims upon his attention to divert him from the performance of these instructions, he caused to be entered among the records of the Richmond Hustings Court a paper that assured the immediate liberation of all the slaves attached to "Arlington," "Romancoke," and the "White House"; and not satisfied with this formal announcement, he directed letters of manumission to be sent to every one whose address could be obtained after a diligent inquiry. Practically, therefore, neither Colonel Lee nor any member of his family had any interest in slaves when he was compelled to decide upon the course he should pursue.

Had the ownership of numerous slaves been the only influence to shake Colonel Lee's loyalty to the national authority, he was not the man to allow so selfish a feeling to govern his conduct. In a conversation with the elder Francis P. Blair on the eve of Virginia's secession, he declared, in tones of great earnestness, the sincerity of which cannot be questioned, that if he owned all the negro bondsmen of the South, and the one condition of saving the Union was that all should be freed without compensation to him, he would gladly sacrifice their value for the attainment of an object he so ardently desired.

Long before the breaking out of actual hostilities, he seems to have favored a policy of gradual emancipation that would give the community time to adjust itself to the new condition. "In this enlightened age," he wrote in 1858, "there are few,

I believe, but will acknowledge that slavery is a moral and political evil. It is useless to expatiate on its disadvantages. I think it a greater evil to the white than to the colored race, and while my feelings are strongly interested in the latter, my sympathies are more deeply engaged for the former. The blacks are immeasurably better off here than in Africa, morally, socially, and intellectually. The painful discipline they are undergoing is necessary for their instruction as a race, and I hope will prepare them for better things. . . . Their emancipation will sooner result from the mild and melting influence of Christianity than from the storms and contests of fierce controversy. This influence, though slow, is sure. . . . While we see the course of the final abolition of slavery is still onward, and we give it the aid of our prayers and all justifiable means in our power, we must leave the progress as well as the result in His hands who sees the end, and who chooses to work by slow things, and with whom a thousand years are but as a single day. The Abolitionist must know this, and must see that he has neither the right nor the power of operating except by moral means and suasion. Although he may not approve of the mode by which it pleases Providence to accomplish its purposes, the result will nevertheless be the same, and the reason he gives for interference in what he has no concern, holds good for every kind of interference with our neighbors when we disapprove of their conduct."

It is plain that in going over to the Confederacy, Colonel Lee brushed aside every suggestion raised by his pecuniary interests. Was he, in taking that step, influenced by the prospect of greater military advancement than he could look forward to in the Federal army? At the moment when he was called upon to decide upon his course, there was not a single officer in the United States of his own age, who enjoyed a higher reputation as a soldier. As we have seen, he had won great distinction in the Mexican War, and possessed, to an extraordinary degree, the respect and confidence of the Commander-in-Chief, while he was esteemed and admired by his comrades-in-arms. In addition, his spotlessness of character, singular comeliness of person, and striking dignity in deportment; his possession of a name conspicuous for great services in civil and military life almost from the beginning of colonial times, and a connection by marriage with the family of Washington,—all seemed to unite to point to his early and rapid promotion should he retain his old commission. General Scott in public had repeatedly announced his intention to recommend him as his successor, and now that the hero of the Mexican War was verging upon old age, which rendered it impossible for him to take the field in person, and now also that the highest military talents available were required to cope successfully with the difficulties that had arisen, he grew more earnest in his desire that Lee should be advanced to his place in the command of the Federal

army. He urged upon Mr. Lincoln the pressing necessity of securing that officer's services; and he reiterated this to Cameron, the new Secretary of War.

Scott's advice impressed both Lincoln and Cameron so much that each stated separately to the elder Francis P. Blair the Administration's willingness to appoint Colonel Lee General-in-Chief of the army of invasion now in the course of organization. Blair felt authorized to mention this fact, as he correctly looked upon it as an indirect offer of the command, which the Administration quite naturally did not wish to make directly until Colonel Lee had been sounded and found favorable to its acceptance. The Virginian declined the offer on the same grounds that afterward influenced him to proffer his services to the Confederacy. Had he accepted, there is no reason to think that, like McClellan, he would in time have been removed. In the first place, being in possession of far greater military talent, and of equally great organizing powers, he would have used the superior resources of the United States as skilfully and energetically as he used the inferior resources of the Confederacy. In the second place, his spirit of loyal subserviency to the civil authority, which he displayed throughout his military career; his entire lack of political ambition or self-seeking tendencies; his power of winning the good-will of all with whom he was thrown by the quiet dignity and charm of his manner, the spontaneous tactfulness of his acts and words, and the palpable

integrity of his motives, would have given him a hold upon the confidence and respect of the Federal Administration not likely to have been shaken even by passing military catastrophes.

Mr. Lincoln, as soon as he discovered a capable general in Grant, showed no disposition to displace or even to interfere with his chief commander in the field; and this attitude doubtless would have been still more conspicuous in his relations with Lee, had the latter been serving at the head of the Army of the Potomac. As the leader of that army, which would have been a far more efficient instrument had the brilliant courage shown by it on all occasions, been more skilfully directed, Lee, in all probability, would have come out of the war on the Federal side with the same reputation for genius which he won on the Confederate, and at the end of Mr. Lincoln's second term, would have succeeded to the presidency of the United States. An expectation like this an ambitious man might well have allowed to influence him in considering such an offer as that made to Colonel Lee, for its realization was certain to follow upon great success in the field.

He resigned his commission in the United States army in a spirit of profound sadness. "My husband," Mrs. Lee wrote to General Scott, "has wept tears of blood." "No honor," she declared after his appointment as commander of the Virginia forces, "can reconcile him to this fratricidal war." "How Washington's spirit would be grieved," Colonel

Lee himself had written at an earlier date, "could he see the wreck of his mighty labors." His heart seems to have clung to the Union almost to the last. "I can contemplate," he wrote in January, 1861, "no greater calamity for the country than a dissolution of the Union. It would be an accumulation of all the evils we complain of, and I am willing to sacrifice everything but honor for its preservation. However," he added, "a union that can only be maintained by swords and bayonets, and in which strife and civil war are to take the place of brotherly love and kindness, has no charm for me. I shall mourn for my country and the progress of mankind. If the Union is dissolved, and the government is disrupted, I shall return to my native state and share the miseries of my people; and save in their defense, will draw my sword no more."

In a letter written a few months before Virginia became a member of the Confederacy, Colonel Lee expressed doubt as to the constitutional right of secession; but during his examination by a Congressional committee in 1866, when asked whether he looked on himself as having been guilty of treason, he replied that "the act of Virginia in withdrawing herself from the Union" carried him along as a citizen of Virginia, and her laws and acts were binding on him. "I and my people," he added, "considered the act of the state legitimate, and the seceding states were merely using their reserved rights, which they had a legal right to do." "Let each man," he urged in an order to his soldiers issued in Sep-

tember, 1861, "resolve to be victorious and that the right of self-government, liberty, and peace shall in him find a defender." And near the end of the war, when his army was retreating from Petersburg, he said, in dwelling on the causes of secession: "We had, I was satisfied, sacred principles to maintain, and rights to defend, for which we were in duty bound to do our best, even if we perished in the endeavor." Long after hostilities had closed, and he had had an opportunity to weigh the past with calmness, he exclaimed: "I fought against the people of the North because I believed they were seeking to wrest from the people of the South their dearest rights."

Naturally, with a man so full of tenderness, so responsive to every claim of affection, the love of family and kindred, and attachment to the state associated with the most sacred memories of his life, exercised a powerful influence in shaping his decision. "With all my devotion to the Union, and feeling of loyalty and duty as an American citizen," he wrote to his sister, "I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home." But, characteristically, he refused to advise his eldest son, an officer in the army, as to whether he should withdraw from the Federal service. "Tell Custis," he wrote, "he must consult his own judgment, reason, and conscience as to the course he may take. I do not wish him to be guided by my wishes or example. If I have done wrong, let him do better. It

is a momentous question, which every man must settle for himself and upon principle."

Colonel Lee, in resigning his commission, a step he did not take until informed of Virginia's secession, not for a moment underrated the tremendous obstacles to be surmounted before independence could be won. His long service in the army of the United States had made him familiar with the varied resources of the North from a military point of view, while his observation of the bravery and endurance shown by Northern soldiers in battle and on the march during the Mexican War, or in the fights with the Indians on the frontier, had given him a justly high opinion of the courage and fortitude of the troops whom the South would, in the impending conflict, have to resist and overcome before its freedom could be attained.

It caused Colonel Lee, a man of strong affections, as we have seen, sharp pain to tear himself away from so many of his old comrades-in-arms. "You have heard me say," he wrote in 1859, "that the cordiality and friendship in the army was the great attraction of the service. It is that, I believe, which has kept me in it so long, and it is that which now makes me fear to leave it. I do not know where I should meet with so much friendship out of it." If this feeling was peculiarly keen when he thought of parting with his associates of equal rank, it was still more poignant when the prospect of a permanent separation from his commander-in-chief arose. In sending to General Scott his resignation of his

commission, he declared that it would have been offered at an earlier date but for the struggle it had cost him to withdraw from a service to which he had devoted the best years of his life, and all the ability he possessed. "During the whole of that time, nearly a quarter of a century," he added, "I have experienced nothing but kindness from my superiors, and a most cordial friendship from my comrades. To no one, General, have I been so much indebted as to yourself for uniform kindness and consideration, and it has always been my ardent desire to meet your approbation. I shall carry to the grave the most grateful recollection of your kind consideration, and your name and fame will always be dear to me."

Scott accepted Colonel Lee's resignation with great reluctance, and never ceased to regret his withdrawal to support the Confederate cause. But this did not prevent him from doing the fullest justice to the motives influencing his subordinate in taking that step. He never failed to affirm that Lee was moved by "an imperative sense of duty"; and he is said to have found consolation in the reflection "that, in the conduct of the war, he would have as an opponent a soldier worthy of every man's esteem, and one who would never deviate from the strictest rules of civilized warfare."

As soon as the Governor of Virginia was informed of Lee's resignation of his commission in the United States army, he appointed him to the chief com-

mand of the Virginia troops. Notified of that fact, Colonel Lee repaired to Richmond, and in the presence of the secession convention, composed of the most distinguished citizens of a state still fertile in the production of great men, he, on April 23d, received at the hands of its president, John Janney, his new commission as the commander-in-chief of the forces of his native commonwealth. The presentation of that commission was accompanied by an address, which, in its solemn and lofty eloquence, was worthy of so memorable an event, and of the extreme gravity of the country's situation. It was as if the presiding officer of the Roman Senate, in language of the noblest exhortation, was investing with supreme military power in the field some champion, of acknowledged genius and conspicuous services, who was about to set out for the defense of his native city against the invasion of the Germanic hordes. Lee, at this time, was fifty-four years of age, but in the prime of his manly vigor and beauty. The extraordinary dignity of his appearance, and the gracefulness of his easy action and movement, gave an increased weight to the few modest, quiet words with which he thanked the convention for the honor they had conferred upon him: "Profoundly impressed with the solemnity of the occasion, for which, I must say, I was not prepared, I accept the position assigned me by your partiality. I would have much preferred had your choice fallen on an abler man. Trusting in an Almighty God, an ap-

proving conscience, and the aid of my fellow-citizens, I devote myself to the service of my native state, in whose behalf alone will I ever again draw my sword."

CHAPTER IV

FIRST PART IN THE WAR OF SECESSION

No just conception can be formed of the greatness of General Lee's military achievements during the war now opening without a clear preliminary understanding of the varied obstacles which the Confederates had to contend against from the beginning. From start to finish, the advantages preponderated in favor of the North.

First, it had a long-established and highly organized government, with its several departments,—particularly those of War and the Treasury,—in systemized working order. It had an army of disciplined troops, which though small numerically, was a vigorous trunk on which to engraft a greater force; it had a navy capable of immediate enlargement; and it possessed a diplomatic corps of acknowledged standing and influence abroad. Every form of governmental instrumentality necessary for the conquest of the Southern states existed already. All had to be developed, but not one created. In the light of these combined facts alone, it was not presumptuous in the North to think that she would be able to trample down all resistance on the part of the South before the end of ninety days.

Secondly, in the size of their respective popula-

tions, the North and the South were not equally matched. The twenty-two states remaining in the Union contained twenty-two million inhabitants, of whom about five hundred thousand only were held as slaves; the eleven states that withdrew contained nine millions of people, of whom not less than three and a half were negro bondsmen. The proportion favorable to the North was further increased by the disaffection of western Virginia and eastern Tennessee, both of which contributed many regiments to the Federal armies; by the drafting of black troops in the invaded districts; and by the enlistment of German and Irish volunteers, drawn to the United States by the offer of bounties and pensions.

Thirdly, the South was peculiarly vulnerable from its long coast line, and its intersection by innumerable great waterways. At the first blush, the vast area covered by it seemed to be an almost insuperable obstacle to its conquest, since every forward movement would carry the Northern armies farther away from their base, and thus increase the difficulty of protecting their lines of communication. But the disadvantage of distance was more apparent than real. Not only was every Southern state, except Tennessee and Arkansas, penetrable directly from the sea, but all, including Tennessee and Arkansas, were open to invasion by the channels of their great streams, the command of which, as with the Cumberland and Red River in the West, or the James and Rappahannock in the East, either allowed the Federal communications to be run far up

in the interior, or permitted both a rapid and a safe change of base.

Seizure of the Mississippi cut the Confederacy in two; shut it off from its most fertile and abundant region of supply; and practically deprived it of all effective use of fifty-five thousand men at an hour when their presence with the Army of Northern Virginia or at Atlanta would have turned the scale in favor of the South. Seizure of the other great streams enabled the North to throw troops into the very heart of the Southern states; while the blockading of the Atlantic and Gulf ports enabled her to bar the exportation of cotton, by means of which the Confederate Treasury might have been replenished, and mercenaries and supplies in large quantities brought in from abroad. In other words, the possession of a powerful ocean fleet and flotillas of river gunboats enabled the North to convert the disadvantage to her cause of the vast area of the South into a positive advantage, which she used with indefatigable energy from beginning to end. It is not too much to say that, had the South been able to build or purchase an equally destructive navy, she would have won her independence. It was the Federal naval power which enabled the Federal military power to conquer her.

Fourthly, as the South had never attempted to erect manufactures, she was forced, as soon as the blockade barred all importation from foreign markets, to employ numerous unsatisfactory expedients in order artificially to acquire the supplies she

needed. The Southern states formed practically one great plantation, the inhabitants of which confined their attention to agriculture because they knew they could, without difficulty, obtain the manufactured articles they required by exchanging their products for them. The only mechanics and artisans outside of the few existing towns were negro slaves, whose skill was restricted to the simplest departments of work. There were few foundries and still fewer factories. On the other hand, the North was a combination of shop, factory, and farm; and whatever deficiency she was unable to meet out of her own established or improvised resources, she was able to supply by drawing on Europe. As the war progressed, all manufactured articles in the Southern states grew smaller in number until they practically disappeared; in the Northern states, on the other hand, they grew increasingly abundant down to the end of the war, owing to the fostering influence of a higher tariff, and a closer foreign connection. The South was unable, not only to supply her armies with proper clothing and medicines, but also to produce the rolling stock necessary for transportation when that purchased of the North before the war had worn out from overuse. She learned to manufacture cannon, small arms, and ammunition, but she was not equipped to make rails for her overworked railways.

The simplicity of the South's economic interests resulted in a great dearth of men trained to business affairs, who, in a crisis like the War of Seces-

sion, are almost as essential to the success of such a movement as officers in the field. There was in the Southern system the pervading influence of no great business school resembling that which existed throughout the North; nor any of that coöperative spirit, that spirit of combination, to which the free states were chiefly indebted for their marvelous growth. Each planter managed the affairs of his own estate independently of his fellow planters. He needed neither aid nor supervision; nor was he inclined to seek an association with others even when he became interested in some business enterprise.

The absence of captains of industry was severely felt when the South was forced to organize her material resources in order to strengthen her powers of resistance. Her lack of this trained business capacity,—the result of her system alone, as her recent history has proved,—deprived her of the power to utilize even her agricultural wealth to the utmost for the benefit of her armies in the field. Innumerable herds of cattle roamed over the trans-Mississippi prairies; Georgia's rich plains, Alabama's fertile lowlands, the coast lands of South Carolina and the valley of the Shenandoah produced, in extraordinary abundance, the indispensable grains,—wheat, maize and rice; the number of horses, mules, oxen, sheep, and hogs was nearly as great in the Southern as in the Northern states; and yet, with all the bursting barns and droves of live stock, the Southern armies were often for weeks on the verge of a famine, chiefly because the Commissary Department, zeal-

ous and patriotic as it was, had never been educated to those business methods which are to-day inculcated by the new system from the Potomac to the Rio Grande. At the time that the soldiers of General Lee were starving in the trenches of Petersburg, Sherman's army was reveling in the plenty which they found everywhere on their march to the sea. No doubt, the steady contraction of the Confederate territory, the deficiencies in railway rolling stock and the unacceptability of the depreciated currency, in some measure account for the inefficiency shown by the supply department of the Confederate government, but these reasons are pertinent only to the history of the last year or two of the war.

Such were the greatest of the obstacles to success which confronted the Southern people throughout their contest with the North and which, in the end led to their conquest.

What were the advantages enjoyed by them at the opening of the mighty struggle? At that time certainly, the South, man for man, was superior to the North owing to the peculiar physical and moral training enforced by her secluded, independent, open-air life. There was little in the daily occupations of the average Northern citizen to fit him for the performance of military duty; the store and counting house, the factory and foundry, constituted but a poor school for the development of military efficiency, whether consisting of the power to endure want and exposure or to command men. The spirit of persons so situated is naturally one of great hos-

tility to any change that interrupts them in their avocation of money-making; and war, as upsetting and confusing every interest, is always particularly distasteful to them.

The body of the Northern people resided in villages, towns, and cities, and preferred the life of the streets; the body of the Southern people resided in the country and preferred the life of the fields. Long familiarity with nature had cultivated in them quick and accurate sight, firm nerves, constant watchfulness, and the ability in emergencies to decide upon the instant. They were accustomed to camping out in all sorts of weather, and submitting, as a matter of course, to all forms of hardship and privation. The spirit of adventure and love of hazardous enterprises were nourished in their breasts by the pursuit of wild game on land and on water. The whole Southern country was a region of wood and stream. The man who had learned from boyhood how to shoot a partridge, wild duck, deer, or wild cat, with unerring marksmanship, was quite certain of equal success when he came to level his gun at a Federal soldier. "Nine-tenths of our men," a distinguished Confederate officer has stated, "were excellent shots and practiced judges of distance." When Enfield rifles were first distributed among the Confederate soldiers, they immediately knocked off the back-sight, since they needed no mechanical contrivance to assist their aim. Furthermore, there were few among them who had not, from their youth, acquired perfect skill in horsemanship, a fact which gave the

South great tactical advantages, particularly early in the war, before practice in the ranks had made the Federal cavalry equally efficient.

Moreover, the Confederate rank and file was largely drawn from the refined and educated classes of the Southern people. Every profession as well as every social division was represented in the gray lines. The students and alumni alike of the most venerable and exclusive colleges and universities volunteered to serve as privates ; for instance, when hostilities began, nine-tenths of the young men pursuing the courses at the University of Virginia threw down their books, shouldered their muskets, and enrolled themselves in the ranks. In the Rockbridge Battery alone, there were as many as seven masters-of-arts who had graduated from that institution, twenty-eight men who had won college diplomas, and twenty-five former students of theology. What was true of one commonwealth was equally true of the others. When the Army of Northern Virginia was lying in winter quarters in 1863, many of the soldiers, in order to relieve the tedium of inaction, formed clubs for the reading of Latin, Greek and even Hebrew authors.

In the Confederate rank and file, composed as it was of such diverse material from a social point of view, all inequalities were ignored ; young men belonging to the oldest and wealthiest Southern families claimed no consideration beyond that shown their comrades in danger and fellow supporters of a common cause,—the sons of their fathers' overseers,

or the poor whites from the sand hills and pine barrens. The youth who had been brought up in luxury, and had enjoyed every advantage of education, shared his rations with his friend, who had been born in a mountain cabin, and had never in his life passed an hour at school. The youngest son of the commander-in-chief himself, General Lee, was a private in the ranks, and as such participated in the perils and privations of his comrades without the slightest pretension to any form of superiority over the humblest and most obscure among them. All this was the more remarkable in a soldiery drawn entirely from that part of the country where the existence of slavery during several centuries had nourished an aristocratic spirit by producing recognized classes in society.

These influences, which, in combination, were directly calculated to raise the Southern armies' *morale* to a high pitch, were further strengthened by the conviction that they were resisting an unwarranted invasion of their homes. This deep-seated feeling filled them with extraordinary energy and activity. Every man who raised his gun to fire at the enemy remembered that he was defending his distant hearthstone and the dear ones who were gathered about it. This inflaming idea had so gripped the minds of some of the Confederates that even so religious a man as "Stonewall" Jackson thought the South would be justified in raising the black flag as the quickest way to bring the struggle to an end: "Kill, kill, kill," was the drastic plan proposed

by that stern commander for sickening the North with their "wicked attempt," as he termed it, to subdue a free people to their hated yoke.

Never for a moment did the Confederate soldiers forget that they were sprung from the men of the Revolution who had won their independence in the teeth of even greater odds. The rosters of all the Confederate regiments show the same lists of names as those which were entered in the rosters of the Southern regiments during the war with Great Britain. Owing to the unchanged economic condition, the uneventful provincial life, and the perfect homogeneity of the Southern people in the interval, the Revolution seemed to them far less remote in time than it really was; and this fact naturally made them, to an extraordinary degree, conscious of its spirit, and responsive to its lessons and its example. A very large part of the Southern population consisted of persons of Scotch-Irish descent, whose family traditions went back, not only to King's Mountain, Guilford Court-House, and Yorktown, but also to Bothwell Bridge, the Battle of the Boyne and the Siege of Londonderry,—traditions which together gave a fierce concentration to their resolution to resist to the last ditch what they considered to be an unjustifiable encroachment on their rights.

There never existed a people disposed more strongly than were the Southern people under slave institutions to follow leaders who had won their confidence. It was natural that a volunteer army

recruited from such a population should have wished to advance to positions of military control, the very men, who, in times of peace, would have served as their social and political guides; but the evil of such a course was foreseen by the Confederate authorities, and from an early date in the war all the higher officers were appointed by the government and only the lower elected by the troops. Of the twelve hundred graduates of West Point, who, in 1861, were available for immediate military service, about three hundred were of Southern birth, and with few exceptions, the latter, as soon as hostilities began, thought themselves under a sacred obligation to defend their native states. Owing to this fact, the Confederacy acquired on the threshold of the war a considerable body of men who had enjoyed a sound and thorough theoretical military training, supplemented, in many conspicuous instances, by practical experience in the Mexican campaigns.

All the early nominations to high command made by Mr. Davis were strikingly judicious. Having been for some years at the head of the War Department of the Federal government, and having himself taken an active part in the Mexican battles, he was competent, by his personal knowledge of the officers of the old army seeking service in the Confederate, to estimate their relative qualifications correctly. Many civilians were advanced to the rank of brigadier-general, but all the commissions carrying the highest responsibilities were reserved

for men who had been educated at West Point, and who had already participated with distinction in actual warfare. It was largely due to Mr. Davis's military training and experience that the organization of the Confederate armies was from the beginning marked by extraordinary efficiency: a single army was commanded by a general, a division by a major-general, and a brigade by a brigadier-general; —a simple, natural, and logical system, which, except in a very few cases growing out of individual idiosyncrasies, assured perfect subordination among the officers of the highest rank.

The Confederate government's first false step was in establishing its capital at Richmond, a point so open to approach by both land and sea that it was possible to attack it at once from the north and east, and even from the south. The presence of valuable mills, foundries, and factories in that city doubtless had a powerful influence in its selection as the seat of the central administration, but, had Atlanta, a town to be invaded only from the north been chosen, the same manufactures could have been built up there. As we shall see, the struggle to hold Richmond when no longer strategically advisable, made Lee's successful resistance to Grant's assaults from the Wilderness to Cold Harbor of no practical importance beyond postponing the inevitable hour of final surrender. The Confederacy was conquered in the West: there all of its available resources should have been concentrated; and there at some point like Atlanta, far from the sea and

protected on the north by a fortified mountainous region, its capital should have been fixed. By the transfer of the seat of government to Richmond, General Lee's military career was destined to become associated with the eastern theatre of warfare alone, instead of with the western, where the successes of the Army of Northern Virginia, unhampered by the vulnerableness of Richmond and the necessity of holding it, would, in all probability, have secured the independence of the Southern states.

Immediately after receiving his commission as commander-in-chief of the Virginia troops, General Lee, with characteristic energy and resolution, took all the necessary steps to protect the state against invasion. To the call for volunteers issued by Governor Letcher, there had been a quick response by a large body of men; and these having been formed by Lee into companies, the companies into regiments, and the regiments into divisions, all were carefully drilled in order to ensure concert and cohesion. The supply of firearms was extremely small: sporting rifles and fowling pieces had to be requisitioned to supplement the infantry's equipment; while for the cavalry's use, rude lances, manufactured, in most instances, by country blacksmiths, had to be procured. Early provision was also made for the casting of cannon. Before two months had passed, by which time Richmond had been chosen as the seat of government, and troops from other states besides Virginia were pouring in

to be organized into divisions, Lee had dispatched sixty infantry and cavalry regiments, and also numerous batteries of artillery, to the front. Of these soldiers, not less than 40,000 consisted of Virginia militia, which became the nucleus of the armies soon operating in the Valley and around Manassas. Lee had at an early date recognized the importance of seizing Harper's Ferry and the Gosport Navy Yard, and of throwing up earthworks to bar the Federal advance by water to the upper reaches of the main streams.

In June, the War Department undertook the task of organizing the newly recruited forces, and Lee's duties as commander-in-chief of the Virginia troops thereby came to an end. He was one of the five generals appointed at this time by an act of Congress, but as there was, at the moment, no army without a commander, he was retained by Mr. Davis as his military adviser, and in that capacity was, at a most critical hour, engaged in directing the general movements of the Confederate forces, more particularly in the theatre of operations in northern Virginia. He was chiefly responsible for the strategical plan which led up to the victory at Manassas; and it was due to his energy in hurrying forward troops to that part of the state that so successful a blow was made possible.

Previous to Manassas, the Federals were advancing from four different quarters; namely (1) down the Alexandria and Orange Railway, which afforded a safe line of communication with Washing-

ton and protected the capital; (2) up the Shenandoah Valley, with Harper's Ferry, which the Confederates had evacuated, as a base; (3) through the passes of northwestern Virginia; and (4) up the Peninsula, with Fortress Monroe as a base. It was necessary that the Confederate forces should be promptly and judiciously distributed in order to meet the invasion threatened from each of these points of the compass. Johnston was stationed in the Valley with 15,000 men; Beauregard at Manassas with 20,000; Huger at Norfolk and Magruder at Yorktown with 17,000 when combined; Garnett in West Virginia with 5,000; and Holmes at Acquia Creek with 8,000; a total of 65,000 troops.

The policy adopted by Lee at this time, with the approval, and perhaps at the dictation of Mr. Davis, who was always primarily influenced in his military views by political motives, was for the Confederate armies in Virginia to stand on the defensive. This left the Federals to develop their own plans at their leisure. The first point that they decided to attack was Manassas, where Beauregard lay encamped for the purpose of guarding the junction of the Alexandria and Orange Railroad with the Manassas Gap Railway, which formed the line of communication between his army and Johnston's stationed near Winchester. Lee and Davis determined to reinforce General Beauregard by ordering the transfer of Johnston's troops to Manassas, but delayed transmitting these instructions until it could be plainly seen whether McDowell's advance

from Washington was really directed against that place. The Federal aim becoming clear by July 17th, Johnston was commanded by telegraph from Richmond to move at once by the railway across the Blue Ridge to Beauregard's assistance.

The issue of the battle which so soon followed is well known, and to no one did it give more satisfaction than to General Lee. "I wished," he wrote a few days later, "to participate in the struggle [at Manassas] and am mortified at my absence, but the President thought it more important that I should be here. I could not have done as well as has been done, but I could have helped and taken part in the struggle for my home and neighborhood. So the work is done, I care not by whom it is done, and my thoughts and strength are given to the cause, to which my life, be it short or long, will be devoted."

The victory of Bull Run was allowed by the Confederates to pass without any real effort to gather its substantial fruits. General Johnston, who was responsible for this failure, asserted in his own defense that the victors were more demoralized by their success than the vanquished by their defeat, a statement questioned by General Beauregard, his colleague, and upon its face open to grave doubt in the very nature of things. Johnston, whose military character would perhaps have shone more brightly had he lived in the seventeenth or eighteenth century, when the slow and formal manner of making war was more in vogue, exhibited after Manassas that spirit of overcaution, if not of ti-

midity, to which he was too much disposed to yield. When the Federals retreated in confusion from the battle-field, three and a half hours of daylight still remained, while there were near at hand not less than 15,000 Confederate troops who had not fired a gun. Had they pushed on to Centreville by the direct road, they could have reached that point ahead of the fugitives, as the latter had taken a more circuitous route. Nor would the body of fresh Federal troops under Miles's command have certainly offered a determined resistance, as they, too, must have felt the weakening influence of the flight which they had been called upon to witness.

Even if Washington could not have been successfully stormed, the Confederate army might have taken a position between Baltimore and the capital, without serious apprehension of an attack in the rear by Patterson, as his army had been greatly diminished by the expiration of enlistments. The Confederate troops, full of confidence and ardor as the result of their victory, and of enthusiastic loyalty to their leaders, with only new recruits for the most part to face, would very probably have compelled the Federal government to abandon Washington, while Maryland, encouraged by this success, would have arrayed herself openly on the side of the South, to the augmentation of the Confederate army by fifty thousand men at the least.

McClellan began to reorganize the Federal army immediately after his appointment to its command. Many thousand recruits were now added; it was

supplied with abundant stores, ammunition, arms, and ordnance; and thoroughly drilled. In the meanwhile, Johnston and Beauregard looked on with alarm. Knowing that each day would increase the odds in their new opponent's favor, they urged Mr. Davis to withdraw at once from different Southern points a large body of troops for union with those at Centreville preparatory to a grand invasion of the North before McClellan could further strengthen his position. In other words, they proposed to do now what should have been done immediately after the battle of Manassas. Mr. Davis refused to approve this aggressive but judicious plan, although aware that McClellan was hastening his elaborate preparations for overrunning Virginia with one hundred thousand men. The Confederate President's reasons for this decision were, first, that the withdrawal of troops from Georgia and the Carolinas would, by weakening those states' power to resist invasion, create discontent; and secondly, that the South should confine herself to defensive campaigns. This was the first and, for the Confederate cause, perhaps the most fatal of the numerous sacrifices of strategic necessity to short-sighted political motives. A victory on Northern soil, following so closely upon the victory at Bull Run, would have raised the spirits of the Confederates to the highest point, sunk those of the Federals to the lowest, led to the evacuation of Washington, and not improbably to foreign intervention.

General Lee was not responsible for this flagrant

error of judgment. At this time, he was not serving as Mr. Davis's military adviser; had he been at the Confederate President's side, he would most probably have supported Johnston's and Beauregard's plans because entirely in harmony with the suggestions of his own military genius as exhibited in his subsequent career. He himself was now indirectly to suffer from Mr. Davis's refusal to consent to these plans. Had Johnston and Beauregard crossed the Potomac, the Federal government would have been compelled to hurry forward to Washington's defense every soldier then stationed in the neighboring regions. The army operating in western Virginia would have been so seriously diminished that Lee, on his assignment to the command of the Confederate forces in that quarter, would have been able to occupy the country with little opposition. All that had been lost there would have been regained; and the Baltimore and Ohio Railway, so important as a feeder of the Federal armies in the East, seized, and perhaps permanently held.

At the beginning of the war, General Garnett, with a considerable force, had been dispatched to western Virginia to resist the invasion of that region from Ohio and Pennsylvania. Western Virginia was separated physically from the eastern portion of the state by the Alleghanies' rugged chain, and sentimentally by the absence of negro slaves. There was in its different communities a large body of waverers, whose allegiance was certain to go to the

Federal or Confederate side as the arms of either succeeded or failed; and this body would decide which section of the equally divided inhabitants would carry the whole region for the Northern or Southern cause.

The first step toward western Virginia's abandonment had been taken by Johnston in evacuating Harper's Ferry in order to be able the more quickly to unite his army with Beauregard's at Manassas, a step disapproved by General Thomas J. Jackson, who, having fortified the heights opposite the town, defied dislodgment. Jackson's view was supported by General Lee, at that time acting as Mr. Davis's personal adviser. It was not many weeks before the retirement from Harper's Ferry was followed by Garnett's death at Carrick's Ford, and the rapid exclusion of the Confederate forces from all that part of the state. McClellan, the commander of the Federal troops, did not stop until he had seized and strongly fortified the principal passes leading into northeastern Virginia. The most important result of these Federal successes was that they turned all the waverers to that side, which gave a preponderating influence to the men, who, from the beginning, had been disaffected to the Confederacy.

After Garnett's death, the Confederate forces in western Virginia were broken up into four detachments, two of which, under Wise and Floyd, respectively, were stationed in the Kanawha Valley; the remaining two, under Loring and H. R. Jackson, between Staunton and Parkersburg. The Con-

federate authorities at Richmond saw that the only hope of recovering the lost ground lay in the appointment of a commander who, by combining these several bodies of troops, would be able to use them as one army against the strongly entrenched and confident enemy. Mr. Davis first offered the position to General Johnston, and when he declined it, to General Lee, a proof, in each instance, of the importance attached to the proposed operations in that region. Lee was thought to have special qualifications for a campaign in a mountainous country owing to the reputation which he had won in the Mexican War by his successful reconnaissances over rough and precipitous ground. In accepting the appointment, however, he was not disposed to underestimate the great difficulties to be overcome. Not only would he have to surmount the obstacles of a mountainous region and an unfriendly population, but also remove the weakness and confusion caused by dissensions among the officers, and the depression among the troops, owing to their repeated defeats. The season was also one that might prove unpropitious to bold and energetic operations, as in the early summer, the rains were frequently heavy and prolonged, a particularly serious drawback in a country remarkable for the existence of few good roads.

General Lee left Richmond in July to take up his new duties. At this time, the Federal forces stationed in western Virginia were divided into three detachments under the supreme command of

General Rosecrans, who had succeeded McClellan when the latter had been transferred to Washington. Of these detachments, one under Rosecrans himself, was advancing up the Kanawha Valley; the remaining two under Reynolds, were encamped, one in Cheat Mountain Pass to bar the Confederate march along the turnpike uniting Staunton with Parkersburg; the other at a point some seven miles away, but in a position to come to their comrades' assistance if needed.

Lee decided to attack Reynolds's force numbering 3,000 men, in the hope of overwhelming it before aid could arrive; but he was compelled to delay doing so by a heavy rainfall, which continued with little interruption during six weeks. The roads under this downpour soon melted into such quagmires that it became impossible to move the wagon trains for any distance. Typhoid and measles grew epidemical among the troops, unaccustomed to such extraordinary and prolonged exposure, and not less than one third of the little army was thus disabled. Lee, using this interval of inaction to reconnoitre his ground, discovered that the enemy had erected in Cheat Mountain Pass a bulwark consisting of a block fort flanked by outworks of earth and logs, and protected by dense abatis. Apparently, the most effective way of attacking this position would be by advancing along the turnpike against the front or rear of the entrenchments, as the mountain walls rose abruptly on each side.

It was now September, and winter, which must

close the campaign, came on early and suddenly in that high, remote, and inhospitable region. Colonel Rust reported that, during a reconnaissance, he had found a path along which infantry could be led to the mountain's rear. Lee at once concerted a plan of attack promising success. General H. R. Jackson was ordered to march forward to the turnpike and take a position there in readiness for an assault in front as soon as he heard the signal agreed upon beforehand; while General Anderson, by following a circuitous route, was to take a similar position in the enemy's rear, and to await the same signal. This signal was to be given by Colonel Rust, who was to attack the Federal fortifications from the mountainside. The other Confederate troops were to be occupied in preventing the second Federal detachment, encamped in the valley of Taggart's River, from reinforcing their comrades stationed in the pass. Before this plan of a concerted assault could be carried out, it would be necessary for the soldiers participating in the surprise operations to traverse twenty miles of rugged wooded mountain slopes.

The troops set out, and they had nearly reached the end of their march, when a violent storm arose, which continued unabated through the whole night preceding the morning appointed for the joint attack. The men were exposed to its full fury. Though drenched to the skin, with their firearms rendered unserviceable for the time being, and their rations destroyed, at daybreak they began to pre-

pare for the assault. The first sound of Rust's musketry was to be the signal for the simultaneous rush against the enemy's front and rear, but the sound never came. It afterward appeared that Rust, in advancing to the position assigned him, had captured some Federal pickets, who represented that five thousand soldiers, fully prepared, were quietly awaiting in their fortification below the expected attack, and when morning arrived, the information seemed to be confirmed by a careful reconnaissance of that position. Rust's resolution weakening, he failed to give the signal, and the opportunity was irretrievably lost. As the other Confederate detachments considered it unwise to assault without the signal, since it alone would have assured coöperation, they remained quietly in their places. The enemy having got wind of his design, the success of which was dependent upon an unexpected attack, and his troops being without food, Lee was forced to retire to his original camp. Though keenly disappointed by the failure of his carefully matured plan, with characteristic generosity he omitted in his report of the operations all reflection on the officer responsible for their failure, one of the first instances of that forbearance in dealing with incompetence and even insubordination devoid of disloyalty to the cause, which he was to show at other critical moments of his military career.

During these operations, Wise and Floyd were slowly retreating up the Kanawha and New River valleys before Rosecrans's columns, advancing to

join Reynolds. Foiled in his main purpose, which was, by the Federals' expulsion from Cheat Mountain Pass, to throw open the road to the northern parts of western Virginia, Lee decided to merge in one body the greater proportion of his scattered forces, and with this attack Rosecrans before Reynolds could come to his assistance. Having ordered the largest section of the troops stationed at Cheat Mountain to follow him, he pushed on ahead with his staff, and by October 7th had reached Floyd's camp at the eastern base of Sewell's Mountain. Wise was now posted on that mountain's western crest, and as his position offered superior advantages, Lee directed the immediate concentration there of all the men belonging to Floyd's detachment. Hardly had this been effected when Rosecrans appeared on the opposite crest about a mile distant and separated from the Confederate position by a long gap, impassable but for the turnpike that intersected it laterally. After reinforcements reached him from Cheat Mountain, Lee's army numbered fifteen thousand troops; but, although his officers urged an assault on the enemy's entrenchments, he declined to permit it because of a hope that Rosecrans would become impatient and attack him first. If not, the Federal position could be easily turned.

Lee was arranging to dispatch a large force to the enemy's rear after nightfall when, on day breaking one morning, Rosecrans, at the head of his entire army, was seen retreating westward. He did not attempt to pursue, because, first, his artillery and

wagon horses had been greatly reduced by exposure to the cold rains and by lack of provender; and secondly, the only provisions obtainable for his men, now seventy miles distant from the railroad which was their base of supply, must be collected from the country adjacent to the line of march, and the deeper they penetrated that unfriendly mountainous region, the more precarious and dangerous their situation would become. General Lee always declared that, even if he had attacked Rosecrans and won a victory, he would have been compelled to fall back at last to his base of communications. It shows his perfect self-control that, although aware that the failure of his plans at Cheat Mountain had subjected him to public criticism and shaken popular confidence in his ability, nevertheless he was not to be driven by any desire of restoring his lowered prestige to expose his troops to the terrible losses of a frontal assault on the Federal position at Sewell's Mountain as long as there was a hope of turning that position by a flank movement. "I could not afford," he said with characteristic simplicity, "to sacrifice the lives of five or six hundred of my people to silence public clamor."

If Lee's reputation had suffered from his failure to expel the Federals from Cheat Mountain, it was even more damaged by his allowing Rosecrans to escape without the loss of a man. The impression arose that he was over-cautious to the point of timidity; that he lacked the capacity to handle large bodies of troops; and that, after all, he was fitted only for

the performance of the tasks assigned to the organizer, the engineer, and the reconnoitring officer. The disappointment caused by the final issue of the campaign was in proportion to the sanguine expectations of success created at the beginning by his appointment to the command. The importance of driving the Federals from that region had been clearly recognized, and yet nothing had been accomplished toward loosening the hold which they had secured. The permanent result of Lee's failure was the establishment of the state of West Virginia; had he succeeded at Cheat and Sewell Mountains, his native commonwealth would to-day perhaps still cover its original extent of ground.

No doubt, the obstacles which had to be overcome,—obstacles made worse by the previous operations of the generals whom he found in the field when he arrived,—were very serious. A region already overrun by the enemy, a disaffected population, heavy rains, impassable roads, sickness among the troops, enfeebled draught animals, insufficient food and provender for man and beast, subordinate officers torn by jealous dissensions, rank and file discouraged and depressed,—all these elements in the character of the situation made the task undertaken by him in western Virginia an uncertain one, though not necessarily an impracticable one. In his later career, he exhibited a capacity to surmount far greater difficulties. After all has been said in explanation of his failure at Cheat and Sewell Mountains, it is still clear that the Lee of the western

Virginia campaign was not quite the Lee of Gaines' Mill, Second Manassas, Sharpsburg, and Chancellorsville. These great achievements, marked by such extraordinary boldness, promptness, and energy, were not foreshadowed by anything done by him among the wild ranges of the Alleghanies. Never, however, did the moral stature of the man loom more resplendently than after this unfortunate series of events. The only comment that he made on the severe reflections passed on his acts was, "While they were hard to bear, nevertheless it was only natural that such hasty conclusions should be reached." "It is better," he added, "not to attempt a justification or defense, but to go steadily on in the discharge of duty to the best of our ability, leaving all else to the calmer judgment of the future, and to a kind Providence."

Perhaps, Mr. Davis's most signal act of service to the Confederate cause was his refusal to allow an unreasoning public clamor to shake his confidence in Lee's ability. Had the Confederate President been unfamiliar with the old army's *personnel* and the standing of its officers before the war began, the general would probably now have been relegated to a position from which he would never have emerged, had advancement depended exclusively on the goodwill and favorable opinion of the Chief Executive. His assignment to the duty of strengthening the coast defenses of Georgia and the Carolinas was evidently intended to be a mere temporary appointment, as was shown by his recall to Richmond as

soon as a more conspicuous position could be offered to him. Lee, however, allowed no such expectation to influence him in taking up his new tasks. No word of complaint, no exclamation of impatience or disappointment, escaped him when he set out for his new scene of operations; indeed, but one ambition moved him, namely, to perform the work before him thoroughly and permanently. Nor was this work of an easy or unimportant character. The fact that the Federals controlled the sea, not only had made the enforcement of the blockade practicable, but also had thrown open the country along the coast to the incursions of large bodies of troops. As soon as Fort Sumter had been captured, the Confederates had striven to fortify the most salient points, such as Roanoke Island, the mouth of the Cape Fear River, Georgetown, and the harbor of Charleston; but the defenses erected there failed to prevent the Federals from seizing other points of great strategic importance which were allowed to remain unprotected. The capture of Port Royal, for instance, had taken place at an early date, and it had been followed by the seizure of Roanoke Island. The Confederates began to fear that these successes would soon make Charleston and Savannah untenable.

At this important crisis Lee arrived to take charge. It was now November, and winter was rapidly approaching. Establishing his headquarters at Coosawhatchie, he first directed his attention toward a careful examination of the whole region

with that unsurpassed eye for the right position for resistance which had always distinguished him. So skilfully did he choose his ground, that the batteries erected by him were able to repulse without difficulty the reconnaissance soon undertaken by the combined Federal army and navy. Lee now turned with unrelaxed energy to the construction of a general system of coast defenses. His first step was to withdraw the garrisons occupying the forts situated on the outlying islands, and to concentrate them behind a strong interior line of separate fortifications, which, if held, would constitute a permanent barrier against further Federal advance from the sea in that direction. The most important points on this continuous line were Charleston, Pocotaligo, Coosawhatchie, and Savannah. Each fortification was situated sufficiently near to the fortification on each side to be able to obtain assistance in a few hours, if required in the crisis of an attack. All were armed with heavy ordnance cast for the special purpose.

So thoroughly and skilfully did Lee construct these coast defenses that it was not until Sherman's flank march through the Carolinas occurred that the towns along the seaboard fell into the enemy's hands, and then only by invasion in their rear. Not until near the end of hostilities was the Confederate line of communication from the Mississippi to the Potomac and Rappahannock broken. Upon the strength of this line, the Confederacy's existence had depended, and the ability to maintain it in-

tact so long, in spite of numerous attempted incursions from the sea, was due to the strategical genius which Lee had shown in selecting positions for fortification, and to his tactical genius in adopting the proper measures for their successful defense.

CHAPTER V

PENINSULA CAMPAIGN

WHILE Lee was engaged in the useful but not very conspicuous task of extending and strengthening the South Atlantic coast defenses, no events of great importance had been taking place in the military theatre of Virginia. As we have seen, the opportunity to strike an effective blow immediately after the Federal rout at Manassas had been lost by an unwarranted exaggeration of the difficulties to be overcome; and a second opportunity had been permitted to pass because Mr. Davis refused to consent to the proposed invasion of Maryland. In the interval between July, 1861, when the battle of Manassas was fought, and March, 1862, when General Lee again became Mr. Davis's chief military adviser at Richmond, the Confederate armies in the East had taken part in but one small battle; McClellan had been suffered, without the slightest attempt at interfering, to form, equip, and drill a force of 150,000 men at Washington; and with this body of thoroughly organized troops, a second body of 30,000, stationed in western Virginia under Frémont, and a third of the same number, under Banks in the Shenandoah Valley, were, at a single word of command from him, ready to coöperate. Against

this formidable host, the Confederate government could marshal only 60,000 men, armed with muskets and artillery of a far inferior pattern, and in possession of a far smaller proportionate quantity of war materials and ordinary supplies.

McClellan's original plan was to place himself at the head of 273,000 men, and while the Federal gunboats and transports moved down the coast and disembarked, at the most eligible points, large bodies of troops for the invasion of the interior, he himself was to march southward from Washington, and driving the Confederate forces before him, capture in turn Richmond, Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile and New Orleans. It was a grandiose conception worthy of the "Young Napoleon" of the Northern imagination. Who, however, can assert with confidence that it could not have been realized, had McClellan been in a position of supreme military power? The subordinate plan of seizing points along the seacoast was, as already stated, carried out until checked by the newly fortified line raised by General Lee; but the advance of the military avalanche overland, with the intention of not halting until New Orleans was reached, was abandoned even before the Confederate army, in expectation of its approach, retreated southward from Manassas. Mr. Davis, greatly alarmed by the fall of Forts Donelson and Henry in the West, ordered Johnston to retire behind the Rappahannock, as the most certain means of protecting Richmond, whether the enemy should descend by way

of Manassas or Fredericksburg. It was a lowering moment for the Confederacy in both the eastern and the western fields of operation; everywhere, the Southern armies were falling back discouraged, and with every mile of retrogression, the hope of foreign intervention declined.

It was in this depressing posture of affairs that General Lee, under the supreme control of the Confederate President, undertook the duty of directing the general movements of all the Confederate forces both in the Western and Eastern Departments; but necessarily his attention was chiefly engaged with the theatre of operations close at hand. It had been at first suggested that he should be appointed Secretary of War, a position for which his talents for organization and administration were thought especially to fit him. But this purpose if ever seriously entertained was soon abandoned.

When Johnston retreated behind the natural bulwark of the Rappahannock, McClellan decided to transfer his army by water to the Peninsula as the first step toward an attack on Richmond from that quarter. This change of plan was superinduced by the fact that it would do away with a long and perhaps exposed line of land communications; and, by allowing the close coöperation of the fleet, assure a safe refuge from pursuit in case of defeat. It also would permit the transportation to a point not very far from Richmond of the heavy ordnance designed for the formal siege of that city. To this new plan, Mr. Lincoln, already apprehensive for

Washington's safety because of "Stonewall" Jackson's first operations in the Valley, refused his consent unless a large force of troops were left behind in a position to come quickly to the capital's defense if necessary.

The military situation on May 1st was as follows: McClellan was moving slowly up the Peninsula in the track of the retreating Confederates; McDowell was marching even more slowly southward from Washington, with the intention, if the Federal capital remained unthreatened, of ultimately uniting with McClellan on the Chickahominy in an assault on the entrenchments of Richmond; Banks was encamped in the Valley, and Frémont in western Virginia.

Lee perceived that should these four separate armies, which embraced 200,000 men, be suffered to combine, their strength would be irresistible, and the Confederacy would be destroyed perhaps in a single battle. How were they to be kept apart until the Confederate forces had had a chance of defeating them in detail? It was now that Lee's great strategical ability came to his assistance. He was perfectly aware that the power moving the Federal armies was centred in the President, and that Mr. Lincoln's first consideration, like Mr. Davis's, was to protect the safety of his capital. Nor was this unwise, for at this time, the North was beginning to grow restive under the extraordinary taxation, and England and France, irritated by the cotton famine, and perhaps secretly anxious to break

up the Union, were ready to take advantage of Washington's capture to recognize the Confederacy, and throw open the Southern ports to the importation of gold, munitions, and mercenary troops. Correctly anticipating the extent to which the Federal President would allow his well-grounded fears to govern his actions, Lee determined to inaugurate a vigorous offensive in the Valley at the very time that he concentrated every available man in the lines confronting McClellan on the Chickahominy. With Jackson thundering down the Shenandoah, and threatening to cross the Potomac for a march upon Washington, it was not probable that Mr. Lincoln would permit McDowell, at the head of 40,000 men, to descend below Fredericksburg to join hands with the right flank of McClellan's army; still less probable was it that Banks and Frémont would be ordered to move eastward to positions where they also would be directly in touch with the Federal forces entrenched on the Chickahominy. In the meanwhile, an opportunity might be presented to Johnston to strike the latter a blow which might at least cause McClellan to raise the siege of Richmond.

As early as April 21st, Lee, having informed Jackson of McDowell's advance southward, had urged him to march against the enemy immediately confronting him in the Valley, as a means of creating a diversion, and although unable to send him reinforcements for that purpose, had permitted him to retain the troops belonging to Ewell's and Johnston's commands. Again on May 16th, Lee wrote:

"Whatever movement you make against Banks, do it speedily, and, if successful, drive him back toward the Potomac and create the impression as far as possible that you design to threaten that line." The battle of Winchester soon following, Banks was pressed in confusion across that stream, and Mr. Lincoln was made too apprehensive for the safety of Washington to permit McDowell to unite with McClellan. Thus with the aid of his energetic lieutenant, Lee, without quitting his desk in Richmond, had relieved that city of the impending presence of 100,000 additional Federal invaders, and had lured McClellan into a position of extraordinary difficulty and danger. All this had been accomplished by the strategical use of the 17,000 Confederate soldiers stationed in the Valley, the first conspicuous illustration in practice of that audacious spirit which Lee was to display throughout the remaining years of the war, and upon which he was to rely, and to rely successfully so long as Jackson lived, as the only means of equalizing the chances in contending with such superiority in numbers. This spirit was confirmed by the sympathy and coöperation of Jackson, a man fully capable of entering into all Lee's designs, and just as able to carry them out in the field.

The Federal delay at Yorktown had given Lee time to play on Mr. Lincoln's fears by the active use of the Confederate troops on the Shenandoah. Before the Federal army could reach even Williamsburg, McDowell had been ordered, not only to stop

his movement southward, but also to dispatch one half of his force to the assistance of Banks and Frémont in the Valley. As McClellan approached Richmond, he was far from sure that he could rely in the future on being reinforced by even the 20,000 men still left under McDowell's immediate control. He possessed, however, one great advantage: Johnston's retreat from the fortified line on the Lower Peninsula having opened the James River as far as Drewry's Bluff, the Federal commander, as his convenience required, either could adopt that stream as a new base of supply, or retain the York River, the old base. By May 24th, he had succeeded in concentrating 105,000 troops on the Chickahominy. Two corps were posted on the stream's south bank, and three on the north; of which latter, one, under Fitz-John Porter, had been sent forward to Hanover Court-House to drive off a Confederate brigade entrenched there to oppose McDowell's expected advance.

The Federal army's position astride a swampy river, crossed by few bridges, and flowing through a densely wooded region, was a dangerous one, and justified only by McClellan's hope that Porter, on his extreme right flank, would soon join hands with McDowell's vanguard. At this season, the first heavy rain would flood the streams and make the roads nearly impassable. The meadows on which the camps were pitched were already sodden with moisture; while the jungles and morasses along the Chickahominy and its tributaries were masses of

damp luxuriant vegetation. In a few days, the miasmatic atmosphere and the polluted drinking water were certain to prostrate many thousand Federal soldiers with fever and diarrhœa.

Porter's success having, for the moment, secured his line of communication with the "White House" on York River, McClellan put off consideration of the question whether it would not be safer to transfer his base to Harrison's Landing on the James. However, before he could either reinforce or withdraw the two corps posted on the Chickahominy's south bank, under the command of Keyes and Heintzelman respectively, a copious rain began to fall; and so rapidly did the flood in the stream rise, that all the bridges connecting the separated Federal wings were threatened with destruction. Johnston, perceiving his adversary's predicament, determined to take advantage of it. On the 31st, he attacked Keyes at Seven Pines, in the hope of crushing him and throwing Heintzelman into a panic before reinforcements could cross the river. The actual assault did not begin until two o'clock in the afternoon because his principal lieutenant, Longstreet, waited for Huger to come up, although aware that every hour lost would further increase the fall in the Chickahominy's waters, and thus augment the chances of a large addition from the other side to the Federal forces. When once in action, Longstreet and Hill succeeded in driving Keyes back upon Fair Oaks, where Heintzelman was stationed. Taking up a new position about six o'clock, the Fed-

erals were able to hold it until darkness ended the battle in that part of the field. In the meanwhile, the Confederate right, led by Johnston in person, had vigorously assaulted the Federal left, but without success, as by this time, Sumner's corps had crossed the river and joined their hard pressed comrades on the south bank.

Johnston having been severely wounded, General G. W. Smith assumed command of the Confederate troops next day. Longstreet was ordered to attack Sumner, but not approving his superior's plan of battle, failed to show energy or promptness; indeed, on his own responsibility, he sent forward only three brigades, thus precisely anticipating his action on the third day at Gettysburg, just as he, before Seven Pines, had, by his delay, anticipated his action on the second day of the same great battle. Had he advanced on May 31st without stopping a moment for support, Keyes and Heintzelman could have been struck in detail before reinforcements could have crossed the swollen Chickahominy; and had he, on June 1st, set himself at work in earnest to carry out General Smith's instructions, Keyes's ruin could have been completed. As it was, the victory of the first day was, on the second, by his half-hearted conduct, converted into a repulse. The failure at Fair Oaks, like the far more momentous failure at Gettysburg later on, was directly attributable to one man's obstinate opinionativeness, amounting practically to insubordination and disaffection.

Informed of Johnston's inability to retain command, Mr. Davis appointed General Lee in his place. The latter arrived on the field the afternoon of the battle of Fair Oaks; and without endeavoring to recover the lost ground, he, that night, drew back the Confederate army to the position which it had occupied on the morning of Seven Pines. The Federals, advancing their outposts nearer the beleaguered city, were soon so close to its confines that its church bells and striking clocks could be easily heard in their camps.

At this moment, the Confederate troops were greatly depressed. The discouragement caused by the apparently needless retreat up the Peninsula had been somewhat lightened by the success won at Seven Pines, but this new elation had been dashed by the upshot of Fair Oaks. Nor was this despondency dispelled by General Lee's appointment to supreme command. His talent as an engineer and organizer was acknowledged, but his capacity for military operations in the field on a large scale was supposed to have been permanently discredited by the history of his campaign in western Virginia. His principal officers were now in favor of drawing back still nearer the city, but as he regarded this as the first step toward the capital's abandonment, which, at that moment of general discouragement, would perhaps have been fatal to the Confederacy, he determined to hold his more advanced position. The impression soon spread that there would be no further orders for retreat; that the next step indeed,

would be one of firm resistance, if not of bold aggression.

Lee's first act was to employ the 64,000 troops now under his command in throwing up a strong earthwork along his whole line, extending from Drewry's Bluff on James River to New Bridge on the Chickahominy, and thence up that stream's south bank as far as Meadow Bridge. As this long fortification rose, the spirits of the troops grew more cheerful. The General personally supervised the work, and before many days had passed, had won his soldiers' confidence by his imposing presence, and careful attention to their wants,—a confidence confirmed by the skill and energy which he was so soon to show on the battle-field.

At this time, but one corps of the Federal army was posted on the Chickahominy's north bank; this was Fitz-John Porter's, which was retained there to protect the line of communication with the Federal base on the York River, formed by the York River Railroad. From the beginning, Lee had determined not to await an assault in his entrenchments, but instead to take offensive aggressive action, in the hope, not simply of forcing the Federal army to abandon the siege, but also, if possible, of breaking it up in its present complicated position. He saw at a glance that the object of attack promising the greatest success was Porter's corps, first, because it was separated from its companions by the Chickahominy; and secondly, because its defeat would signify the rupture of the Federal line of communi-

cation, a result that would force the Federal army to retreat under hazardous circumstances.

Before starting upon this bold movement, Lee took two important steps: he hurried up heavy reinforcements from Georgia and the Carolinas, and he dispatched Stuart on a raid to discover Porter's exact defenses on his right flank. Stuart, after a romantic circuit of McClellan's entire army, reported that this flank had not been fortified, and that it was unprotected by any natural bulwark, such as stream or swamp. In order to divert the Federal commander's suspicions, Lee had already sent two brigades in the most public manner, ostensibly to reinforce Jackson in the Valley, but really to convey instructions to him to march to Ashland with the main body of his troops as rapidly and as secretly as possible. From that point, he was to sweep down into the region between the Pamunkey and Chickahominy Rivers, and while Lee, concentrating on the north bank of the latter stream, should attack Porter's front, Jackson was to assault his unprotected right flank.

It was of prime importance that Jackson should advance so fast that McDowell would not have time to recall the troops dispatched to the Valley, and then, with his army reunited, reinforce Porter. Pressing on ahead alone, Jackson arrived at Lee's headquarters on June 23d, and at a conference of generals, all the details of the projected attack were arranged. The plan adopted was not to be carried out until the 26th, by which day it was ex-

pected that Jackson would be able to strike Porter's right flank and break his line of communication with the White House. In the meanwhile, A. P. Hill was to take a position opposite the Meadow Bridge; and D. H. Hill and Longstreet were to post themselves opposite the Mechanicsville Bridge, one and a half miles below. Magruder, with 28,000 men, was to continue to hold the entrenchments in front of McClellan's main line on the south bank. The active movement on the 26th was to begin with the advance of Jackson's troops, which would clear the Meadow Bridge of its Federal defenders; A. P. Hill would then cross, and marching down stream *en échelon* to Jackson, would in his turn clear the Mechanicsville Bridge; D. H. Hill and Longstreet would follow, the former to support Jackson, the latter, A. P. Hill.

It was anticipated that these combined forces would drive Fitz-John Porter from in front of New Bridge, and thus bring the Confederates once more in immediate touch with their comrades behind the adjacent entrenchments on the south bank, now demonstrating with great zeal in order to discourage McClellan from sending reinforcements to his lieutenant on the north bank. The restoration of the connection with Magruder would remove the only dangerous feature of the movement; namely, the weakening of the earthworks opposite Richmond. If McClellan intended to take advantage of the withdrawal of the great body of the Confederate troops to break through these earthworks with an

overwhelming force, he must do so before the Confederate detachments had assaulted Porter; for if they succeeded in crushing that officer, their line would be a mere extension of the line south of the Chickahominy.

Lee's ultimate object was, by the destruction of Porter's corps, and the severance of the Federal army from its base of supply, to force McClellan to retreat down the Peninsula to Fortress Monroe, a difficult country to traverse, and one from which, if vigorously pursued, he might be unable to extricate his troops. The whole plan was attended with great risks. If McClellan threw his main force on Magruder and drove him out of his entrenchments, Porter's defeat would be no compensation to the Confederates, for the Federal army would be very much nearer to Richmond, and James River would serve as a base of supply even more convenient than the York. But Lee was compelled to run this hazard. A frontal attack was not to be thought of; nor would supineness improve his situation. He felt himself fully justified, by his personal knowledge of McClellan's character, in taking so risky a step. He was perfectly aware that, while his antagonist was bold in conception, he was slow in execution, and disposed to exaggerate an opponent's strength; and that if the attack on Porter was sudden and well sustained, the Federal commander's overcautious nature would prove deaf to aggressive counsels. Lee's judgment of his adversary was soon shown to be correct.

Jackson, when he withdrew from the conference on the 23d, rode back in haste to rejoin his troops, but owing to obstructions in the way, and constant brushes with the enemy, was unable to advance quickly enough to perform the part assigned to him for the 26th. The night of that day, he bivouacked without having attacked Porter's right flank, or brought himself in touch with A. P. Hill, although that officer was operating only a few miles away. As the pre-arranged plan required, Hill had taken position opposite Meadow Bridge. With great impatience, he awaited, on the 26th, the sound of Jackson's guns, which was to be the signal for his own advance. No such sound came; and finally at three o'clock in the afternoon, fearing lest the whole scheme should miscarry, he boldly, and perhaps rashly, assumed the responsibility of moving forward without any assurance of Jackson's assistance. To bring these officers in touch, General Branch had been ordered to post his troops at a point equally distant from each of the two places where their respective attacks were to begin, and as soon as Jackson arrived on the ground, to inform Hill. But this, Branch, though he knew of Jackson's approach, failed to do; and instead moved toward the enemy entrenched on Beaver Dam Creek. Having forced his way across Meadow Bridge, Hill advanced rapidly toward the same spot; and although still unsupported by Jackson, and lacking in artillery, endeavored to storm that strongly fortified position, an act that ended in a costly repulse.

During the night, Porter fell back to Gaines' Mill. Here he received additional troops from McClellan, which brought his total force to 36,000 men; and moreover, he was now in touch with the main army by means of two protected bridges across the Chickahominy. The new position taken up by the corps was one of great natural strength; it consisted of a plateau sinking down by a very abrupt slope to a sluggish ditch-like stream at its base, beyond which opened out a valley, from five hundred to one thousand yards in width, and timbered here and there. The slope was occupied by three lines of infantry, with numerous batteries behind them; while the crest of the plateau was crowned with heavy artillery. To capture this formidable position, the Confederates would have to charge across the valley, leap over, wade, or bridge the swampy stream, and then carry the slope at the point of the bayonet. The whole movement would be exposed to a heavy fire.

Lee, unaware that McClellan had already determined to change his base to James River, expected that Porter, assaulted on the right flank by Jackson, would be compelled to weaken his centre and left in order to protect the Federal line of communication with the White House. As this would diminish his power of resistance on the plateau, Lee decided to attack that position in spite of the formidable character of its defenses. A. P. Hill led the assault, and as he was soon checked, Longstreet came forward to his support. In the mean-

while, Jackson, who had been joined by D. H. Hill, thinking that the enemy, hard pressed in front, would be led to retreat into his jaws, in the effort to preserve their White House communications, remained quietly in his first position ; but the sound of the cannonade from the direction of Gaines' Mill becoming heavy and continuous, he began to suspect that the plan of attack had been changed. No sooner was this conclusion reached, than he advanced at quick step with his whole force, and rushing with characteristic ardor into the battle, turned the swaying tide in favor of the Confederates. The slope and plateau were carried, and Porter was saved from complete destruction only by the confusion into which the pursuit threw the Confederate army ; by the approaching fall of darkness, which made it impossible to follow the retreating Federals into a heavy wood where they had taken refuge ; and finally, by the arrival of two fresh Federal brigades, which, forming a line of steel, enabled the fugitives to cross the river in safety.

Lee had succeeded in nearly disrupting one Federal corps, and in striking that blow had weakened the *morale* of the entire Federal army. At the moment too, he supposed that the interruption of the White House communications was of far more sinister consequence to McClellan than it really was. He, however, was fully aware that Gaines' Mill was only the beginning of operations. Should the enemy be permitted to get away in safety, either to James River

or to Fortress Monroe, they would soon be reinforced, and perhaps return in greater strength.

So far Lee had conducted the campaign with much energy and ability. From this time to its close at Harrison's Landing, a series of mistakes occurred, for which he can only in part be held responsible. In the first place, he did not show great discernment in weighing the probabilities as to what line of retreat McClellan would take. He thought that the chances were better that the enemy would retire to the distant Fortress Monroe rather than to the James River, barely fourteen miles away; and he even imagined that McClellan might seek to maintain his hold upon the old base at the White House. While the Federal commander was actually engaged in burning the bridges across the Chickahominy and clearing the road to Harrison's Landing, with a view to immediate retirement, Lee was keeping his troops stationary on the river's north bank as more convenient for the enemy's interception in their expected march to Fortress Monroe. He even sent Stuart and Ewell to watch the lower bridges to prevent the Federals from retreating toward York River. Stuart was now tempted to make an ill-considered dash upon the White House for the destruction of the supplies there,—not the last time that he was to disconcert his commander's plans by an unseasonable love of adventure. Instead of advancing with a rush to break the line of Federal withdrawal to the James, he failed to join the main body of the Confederate army until after the battle of Malvern

Hill, thus anticipating the fatal error committed by him in the campaign of Gettysburg.

General Lee did not overlook the possibility that McClellan might withdraw to the James. He perhaps relied with too great confidence on Magruder to inform him of the enemy's first movement. Late on the afternoon of the 28th, the Federal entrenchments were reported to be fully manned, while the roads leading across the Chickahominy were still protected by Federal batteries. It was not until the morning of the 29th that the Confederates started in pursuit, and by that time McClellan had gained an advance of one day and two nights. Lee, however, was still hopeful of striking the Federal army a heavy, if not a fatal, blow before it could find a refuge behind its gunboats in the James River.

The plan which he now adopted was full of promise, and had there been perfect concert of action would have proved successful. The route followed by McClellan in seeking his new base was broken by only one obstruction, namely, White Oak Swamp, but a serious one, because it was intersected by a single highway. Lee ordered Magruder to march down the Williamsburg Road and assault the retreating Federals in the rear; while Jackson and D. H. Hill, having passed over the Chickahominy by the Grapevine Bridge, were to support the attack. Longstreet and A. P. Hill were to cross higher up by New Bridge, and then to move down the Darbytown Road until they should come upon the right flank of the Federal army at some point between

White Oak Swamp and James River. Struck on one side of the swamp by Magruder, Jackson, and D. H. Hill, and on the other by Longstreet, A. P. Hill and Huger, Lee was justified in expecting that the enemy, broken into fragments by the two impacts, would lose all power of further combined resistance.

Success could be secured only by the closest coöperation, and this turned out to be impossible. First, Jackson and D. H. Hill lost a day in reconstructing Grapevine Bridge, and in consequence left Magruder to attack the Federal rear alone, a fact that resulted in his repulse at Savage's Station. The enemy's rear was thus able to make the dangerous passage of White Oak Swamp unmolested, and as soon as it had crossed and destroyed the bridge, McClellan posted there two divisions under Franklin to stop the Confederate pursuit from that direction. In the meanwhile, the 4th and 5th Federal corps had halted on Malvern Hill in sight of James River, while five divisions, under Sumner and Heintzelman, were stationed between Malvern Hill and White Oak Swamp in order to protect the trains from an assault by Longstreet and A. P. Hill, advancing down the Darbytown and Charles City Roads.

When Jackson arrived at White Oak Swamp, he found it impossible to rebuild the bridge in the face of a hot fire from Franklin's batteries. Instead of marching around the south end of the swamp and joining A. P. Hill and Longstreet in attacking the Federal flank, he, contrary to the ordinary impulses

of his energetic character, deemed it wisest to carry out Lee's first orders by remaining quietly in the enemy's rear; and he was the more disposed to do this, as Lee was now so near at hand that, had he desired, he could easily have instructed his lieutenant to move around to Hill's and Longstreet's assistance. No such orders came, and Jackson's whole force was thus rendered useless at the moment when those two officers were, in succession, assaulting the Federal lines at Frazier's Farm. Huger was also unable to come up owing to the obstructions in his way. Magruder, marching and countermarching between Holmes on the extreme right, and Longstreet in the centre, gave support to neither. Holmes himself had been driven off by the fire of the Federal gunboats, anchored in the James River, and the Federal corps entrenched on Malvern Hill. Instead of Jackson, D. H. Hill, Longstreet, Huger, Holmes, A. P. Hill and Magruder, simultaneously in rear, centre, flank, and front, launching, as Lee intended, a combined force of 75,000 men against McClellan's retreating army, A. P. Hill and Longstreet alone assaulted that army with only 20,000 troops. Nor were even these led as one body into battle; the number attacking together did not exceed 10,000. The Confederates were unable to plant themselves athwart the Quaker Road, the Federal line of retreat, and with this failure, Lee's chance of breaking up the Federal army was lost, and at the same time the most promising opportunity presented to the South during the whole war, with the

exception of the early morning of the second day at Gettysburg, of winning its independence by a single stroke.

By the dawn of the next day, July 1st, the Federals were concentrated on the slopes and crest of Malvern Hill, a position of greater natural strength than the plateau of Gaines' Mill. It was defended by 250 pieces of artillery, among which were the siege train's heavy guns; and in addition, the Federal flanks were protected by the cross fire of the gunboats in James River. As the approaches to the Hill were obstructed by swampy and densely wooded ground, the Confederates could not expect their artillery to be of much service, should an assault be made. Lee hesitated to order an advance. The only hope of success by a frontal attack lay in the use of the whole army supported by all the cannon. Jackson urged a flank movement even after the order for an assault in front had been sent out. Lee adopted the suggestion; but by an error of the staff, the order for the frontal assault was not rescinded; and before they could be halted, 10,500 men advanced unsupported to attack the entire Federal army. The onset of battle, according to a Federal officer present, was made with the precision of a review, but against a position rendered by nature and art so strong, and defended by a force so overwhelming, that the Confederates' courage and resolution proved unavailing. They were finally driven back with a loss of 5,000 of their number. But the Federals were too exhausted to make a

counterstroke, and after nightfall, withdrew to Harrison's Landing.

Shrinking from an immediate advance through the deep mud of the rain-swept roads, the overworn Confederates did not attempt at once to pursue the retiring foe. Had they promptly seized Erlington Heights, situated in the rear of the Federal camp at Harrison's Landing, and at first unfortified, they would have had McClellan in a dangerous corner, for their artillery could have fired directly down upon his position, while the Federal cannon would have been compelled to shoot upward with a necessarily less accurate aim. Stuart, pushing ahead of the Confederate main body, ascended the Heights, and having planted one howitzer, and thinking that reinforcements would soon arrive, rashly opened fire with this single piece of ordnance; but he was soon driven off by a Federal detachment, and the position rendered impregnable against attack. Lee, deeming it unwise to assault the Heights, withdrew his troops to Richmond. Thus ended the Peninsula Campaign.

If we consider the Valley and Peninsula Campaigns together, it will be clearly perceived that the general result was highly favorable to the Confederate cause, although Lee had signally failed to accomplish all that he had hoped, not so much in consequence of McClellan's great skill in directing his retreating columns, as of his own inability to control the movements of his own forces. The large armies which the Federal government had sum-

moned to the field had been struck, as Lee had originally designed, in detail: Banks, Frémont and Shields had been defeated; McDowell had been prevented from coming to McClellan's assistance; McClellan himself had, after the partial destruction of one corps, been compelled to retire from a point in sight of Richmond's steeples to the protection of his gunboats many miles away, no longer the confident invader, but the anxious pursued, sacrificing in his withdrawal fifty-two pieces of artillery, thirty-five thousand rifles, and a vast quantity of ammunition and stores of all kinds. By these various captures, the Confederate army had added enormously to its effective equipment for battle. Hardly less useful, from a military point of view, was the establishment of Lee's reputation as a capable strategist, and a resolute and even audacious leader in the field.

The Confederate operations in this campaign, however, are open to severe criticism from several points of view. The strategy was undoubtedly superior to the execution. The combinations were correct and far-seeing, but the manner in which they were carried out was halting and disjointed. There had been only one distinct success,—the victory of Gaines' Mill, which was but the natural result of pitting over 50,000 men against 36,000. Lee showed defective reasoning upon probabilities when he allowed himself to think that his antagonist would retreat to Fortress Monroe. Why should that commander do this when James River, patroled by the Federal fleet, was but fourteen miles away to serve

as a new base? Retreat to Fortress Monroe not only would have been more dangerous, because more prolonged, but also a confession of absolute failure on McClellan's part, which the condition of his army with 75,000 fresh men did not justify Lee in imagining his opponent would make. At Harrison's Landing, that army would still be practically in sight of Richmond, and McClellan might not incorrectly assert that his withdrawal from the Chickahominy was merely "a strategic change of base." The expectation that, in retreating to the James, instead of to Fortress Monroe, he could advance such a claim, no doubt largely influenced a man of his self-esteem in taking that step; and knowledge of this side of his character in itself should have served more than it did to guide his opponent in divining his next movement.

Had Lee, as he should have done, deemed it more probable from this, as well as from every other point of view, that McClellan would withdraw to James River rather than to Fortress Monroe, he would have earlier devised means for the rupture of the Federal right flank at Frazier's Farm; and might perhaps have blocked altogether the line of retreat to James River, thus forcing McClellan to recross the Chickahominy, with Jackson, D. H. Hill, and Stuart in front, and Magruder, Huger, A. P. Hill, Longstreet, and Holmes behind. Had McClellan begun his retreat to Harrison's Landing one day sooner, as he might have done, he would doubtless have reached that point without finding the neces-

sity to fight a single,—certainly not more than one,—rear-guard action; and this at Malvern Hill, a position of extraordinary strength, as shown by the battle which took place there.

But even the error of supposing that McClellan would retreat to Fortress Monroe rather than to Harrison's Landing would not, from the Confederate point of view, have affected the campaign's issue so seriously had Lee's carefully weighed plan for a concerted pursuit of the enemy, when their line of withdrawal was known, been carried out. For this he cannot be held strictly accountable beyond his failure to summon Jackson to Frazier's Farm, barely four miles away, when it was seen that that officer could not make the direct passage of White Oak Swamp in the teeth of Franklin's batteries. The lack of combination on that day over the whole field of operations was due primarily to the Confederate army's imperfect staff service. The region in which the several detachments were marching was overgrown with dense woods and penetrated by few roads. It would have been difficult for the coöperating columns to converge with perfect accuracy as to hour and place even if the staff had possessed good maps, or been led by reliable guides; but as both were lacking, divergence and confusion resulted, increased by the staff's own practical inexperience at this time, when so many of the Confederate officers trained in military schools for this branch of service had been drawn away for the performance of regimental duty.

That the Federal army finally escaped with the loss of 16,000 men was not entirely due to the erroneous or defective tactics of its opponent. Throughout the campaign, the Federal troops had fought with extraordinary courage and tenacity. They showed just as much bravery and staunchness at Malvern Hill as at Gaines' Mill. The rout and demoralization of Bull Run were conditions of the past, a fact that might well have dashed the satisfaction which the Confederates derived from the general results of their operations.

CHAPTER VI

SECOND MANASSAS AND SHARPSBURG

On June 26th Mr. Lincoln had ordered the consolidation into one large army of the three small armies commanded respectively by Frémont, Banks, and McDowell; and at its head, he placed General Pope, an officer who had recently won some distinction in the West. After the battle of Gaines' Mill, it became impracticable for this new army to unite with McClellan by land, and it was not thought advisable for it to do so by sea, as Washington would thereby be left open to invasion by way of either Manassas or Harper's Ferry. As a means of guarding the capital, and also of creating a diversion in McClellan's favor, Pope was directed to move his troops toward Gordonsville, with the ultimate design of cutting at that point the Confederate railway communication with the Valley. It was anticipated that Lee would seek to prevent this by weakening Richmond's defenses, which would give the army on the James an opportunity to capture the city.

On July 7th, Banks reached Culpeper, the place where the several detachments of Pope's army were to concentrate. As the Federal authorities had expected, the southward movement of their troops

caused Lee to dispatch several divisions, under Jackson, to Gordonsville. The Confederate general now stood between two Federal armies, the one numbering 50,000 men, the other 80,000. Until McClellan should show his hand, Lee thought it unwise to remove the main body of his troops from their camps at Richmond; but, in order to cause McClellan's withdrawal from James River, by playing on Mr. Lincoln's apprehensions for Washington's safety, he decided to increase the number of troops with Jackson, so as to enable the latter to begin an aggressive campaign northward from Gordonsville. That officer was gradually reinforced until he found himself at the head of 24,000 men.

Now, it was necessary, not only to bring about McClellan's retirement, but also to strike the Federal army under Pope a destructive blow before he could unite with it. Such a blow, Jackson could not hope to inflict with 24,000 troops, but if able to attack in detail the several detachments of the enemy before they had had time to concentrate at Culpeper, he might deliver a stroke that would hasten McClellan's retirement, and thus quickly bring Lee on the ground for a joint assault on Pope before the other Union army could march to his aid from the Potomac. Jackson advanced rapidly northward, and at Cedar Mountain defeated Banks; but on moving forward, he found that the road was barred by an overwhelming Federal force, and he, therefore, fell back to Gordonsville to await the arrival of Lee, now, in consequence of McClellan's with-

drawal from James River, no longer apprehensive for Richmond's safety. In the meanwhile, Pope had been ordered by the Washington authorities to remain at Culpeper.

On August 11th, Lee, accompanied by Longstreet, joined Jackson at Pisgah Church on the south bank of the Rapidan. His aim was to attack and defeat Pope's army before McClellan could come up from Acquia Creek, for should the two Federal forces be able to unite, the numerical predominance in their favor would destroy all prospect of Confederate success. The Confederate army embraced about 55,000 men, which put it on an equal numerical footing with Pope's alone. Only a few hours after Lee's arrival, he ascended Clark Mountain, and from its signal station, looked down on the principal Federal encampment, situated at the base of Slaughter's Mountain, barely fifteen miles away. Thousands of tents were scattered over the face of that part of the landscape ; smoke was rising peacefully from the sutlers' fires ; the cavalrymen had unsaddled their horses and were resting in the shade ; while the infantry were moving about freely and carelessly. The scene's whole aspect showed unmistakably that Pope was still unaware of the presence of the Confederate army, hidden away from sight, as it was, by the intervening rise of ground.

The enemy's most vulnerable section was their left wing, because spread out to a point only six miles distant. It was finally arranged that Stuart,

having with his cavalry moved swiftly around to Rappahannock Station in Pope's rear, should there cut his line of railway communication, while the infantry, having crossed the Rapidan, should strike the Federal position squarely in front. It happened that a part of the cavalry was absent, and Lee, unheeding Jackson's advice to the contrary, decided to await its return. The opportunity was thus lost. A spy, in the interval of postponement, informed Pope of the Confederate troops' presence, and the capture of Stuart's adjutant-general and dispatch box revealed the fact that they embraced almost the entire opposing army. In alarm, Pope immediately drew back to the north bank of the Rappahannock. On the 19th, when the haze began to melt away from the landscape, the Confederate commander, from Clark Mountain, saw only an abandoned camp in the foreground, while far away in the distance, the enemy's rear-guard was discovered vanishing toward the north.

For the moment the prospect of defeating Pope before McClellan could come up seemed to have been lost beyond recovery. How was it possible to strike the former's army a blow in the short interval that must pass before the latter's arrival? The new position occupied by the Federals was more difficult of assault than the old; if attacked in front and worsted, Pope would simply fall back toward Washington until reinforced, and then return in greater strength than ever. Was it practicable, by stealing to the rear of his new position, to break the line of

his communications, cut off his army from assistance, and throw it into a confusion that might render it a comparatively easy prey? If this were possible at all it could be done only by a turning movement from the north. Lee, before deciding upon his final plan, sent Stuart, at the head of his cavalry, across the Rappahannock to burn the railway bridge over Cedar Creek situated at the Federal back; but this could not be accomplished owing to the wooden structure's saturation by the heavy rains. Stuart, however, succeeded in capturing dispatches which showed the strength of Pope's army, his designs for its disposition, his expectations as to reinforcements, and, above all, his purpose to fall back from his present entrenchments on the Rappahannock.

If the Federal army was to be crushed, it must be done at once. The Federal troops were now concentrated on the turnpike connecting Sulphur Springs on the river's north bank with Gainesville, a small village east of Warrenton. Their right flank was protected by the closure of the bridges and fords of the river; their left, by the columns advancing from Washington. Behind the long Federal line, rose the bulwark of the Bull Run Mountains, a range overgrown with dense forests and penetrated by few roads.

Lee and Jackson, the night of August 24th, consulted as to the best plan of overcoming the advantage of this strong position. The whole Confederate army could not pass to the Federal rear without its withdrawal from its station on the river's south

bank being discovered and reported by the Federal outposts. As it would require forty-eight hours for that army to march up the Rappahannock and thence over the Bull Run Mountains to Gainesville or Manassas, Pope would have ample time to draw back, and thus continue to keep his opponent in his front, while he himself would be so much nearer to a junction with the reinforcements now daily expected. The two Confederate generals determined to divide their forces, with the ultimate intention of uniting on the field of battle. Jackson was to move northward to the upper fords of the Rappahannock, and then wheeling to the east, descend from the Bull Run range upon Manassas, in the rear of the Federal army. Lee, remaining in his old position was to make a demonstration in order to divert Federal suspicion; and then, when assured by his cavalry of Jackson's successful passage of the mountains, was to follow in his footsteps. The two wings were to join at some point south of Thoroughfare Gap. It was a bold and hazardous plan, for Pope, by closing up that Gap as soon as Jackson had got through, could apparently prevent Lee from supporting his lieutenant when attacked by the entire Federal army. But there was another pass to the northeast of Thoroughfare, and it was clearly understood by the two Confederate commanders that, should Jackson be hard-pressed without Lee being able to break through Thoroughfare, and come to his aid, he was to fall back to Aldie's Gap and join Lee west of the mountains.

At dawn on August 25th, Jackson started upon his celebrated march. The whole Confederate army did not exceed 55,000 men, and now one-half of its number were about to plunge boldly into a region occupied by over 100,000 hostile troops, probably, in a few days, to be swelled to 150,000 by reinforcements from Washington. Their haversacks contained only three days' cooked rations, for they had determined to rely for their chief subsistence on the green corn now maturing in the fields, on such ripe fruits as were to be plucked in the orchards, and on a small herd of cattle driven in their rear. All baggage was left behind.

During the first day, a distance of thirty-six miles was traversed. The column, in passing rapidly along, was observed from a Federal signal station, but it was surmised that this was the first stage of a retreat toward the Valley. That night the little army bivouacked under the canopy of the open sky, and the stars had hardly begun to grow dim in the heavens the next morning, when the march was resumed, with redoubled ardor and energy. Ascending to the summit of Thoroughfare Gap, they saw from afar, rolling away mile upon mile, the broad plains of Manassas shining in the glare of the unclouded summer sun. Descending, they advanced at double quick toward Gainesville, where they were joined by Stuart's large body of cavalry. From that point, instead of marching straight to Manassas, his real objective, now a vast storehouse of Federal supplies and munitions of war, Jackson

wheeled to the right toward Bristoe Station, a spot nearer the Federal army, and directly in its rear. The seizure of this place would prevent Pope from throwing forward a large detachment to cut off the Confederate line of withdrawal after the destruction of the stores at Manassas. Bristoe Station having been captured, two regiments, accompanied by the cavalry, were dispatched to Manassas, and there began the work in hand at once. They were soon joined by the rest of the little army, with the exception of one division.

When Pope heard that Jackson's corps, which he had at first taken for a small raiding party, had planted itself athwart his line of communications, he hurriedly drew back from the Rappahannock in force toward Gainesville, with the view of concentrating for his daring opponent's destruction. This movement made it safe for Lee to break up his camp on the river's south bank, and hasten onward to reunite with his lieutenant east of the Bull Run Mountains. Expecting his commander's advance, and aware that, should he remain at Manassas, he would be isolated, and perhaps overwhelmed by the Federal army, now numbering, since the arrival of the fifth and third corps, from 70,000 to 80,000 men, Jackson retreated in the direction from which he knew that Lee was approaching.

Pope, deluded by his own wishes and hopes, presumed that his antagonist would make a stand at Manassas, and therefore instead of keeping his troops in a position where, with one arm, he could

hold off Lee, while, with the other, he could crush Jackson, set practically his whole force in motion toward that place. "March at the earliest blush of dawn," so ran his order; "we will bag the whole crowd if we are prompt and expeditious." But the converging Federal corps found no trace of the Confederate general at Manassas except the smoking ruins of the supplies and munitions. It was reported that he had retreated toward Centreville, but no trace of him was to be found there either. What had become of the wily and furtive foe? Jackson had really been falling back westward while Pope had been searching for him northward. After sweeping around the Federal flank, cutting the Federal line of communications, and applying the torch to a vast quantity of Federal clothing, food, ammunition, and other articles of war, he had now planted himself within twelve miles of Thoroughfare Gap, almost in sight of Lee's advancing column.

But Jackson was not satisfied with these achievements alone. They did not constitute the real object of his great march; that object was to seize Pope by the flank, like a bulldog, and by holding on, prevent him from escaping before Lee could come up and give the *coup de grace*. The Union general must be crushed before McClellan could arrive with reinforcements, but so long as he could continue to retreat at will, that hope must be abandoned. With the purpose of finally stopping him, Jackson, halting at Groveton, sprang upon the first

Federal division which passed that way,—a very bold act, as he was then unaware that Lee and Longstreet had forced the passage of Thoroughfare Gap; indeed, that wing of the Confederate army, when night closed the short engagement, was only twelve miles off. There were not less than 70,000 Federal troops still marching and countermarching in his vicinity in an active search for his whereabouts; but it did not occur to Jackson, now that darkness had fallen, that it would be more prudent to fall back for the support of the approaching column. His purpose remained unchanged:—he would not budge an inch before that column's arrival on the ground to give the finishing blow, although the entire force at his disposal for the enemy's detention did not exceed 18,000 infantry, 2,500 cavalry, and forty pieces of artillery.

Concentrating his men behind the deep cuttings and steep embankments of an unfinished railway, he calmly awaited the stroke which he expected to receive the next day. Nor did his anticipations prove incorrect; early on the following morning, an assault was made by the large Federal force which Pope, confident that his opponent was retreating, had sent forward to hold him until heavy reinforcements could arrive for his destruction, the very fate which that opponent had planned to inflict on him. In a few hours, 18,000 additional Federal troops deployed on the ground; and later, there were further accessions of strength. Lee and Longstreet, unknown to Pope, had now reached the extreme

right of the Confederate position. Five gallant and determined assaults in all were made on the Confederate extreme left, but without success. The Federal commander, still unaware of Longstreet's presence on the right, ordered Fitz-John Porter to march around what he imagined to be Jackson's unprotected flank in that quarter and strike the Confederate position in the rear. Porter, recognizing the proposed movement's impracticability with such a force to break through in his front, reported the situation's real character to his superior, who, disbelieving his lieutenant, renewed his peremptory orders for the movement to begin; but it was now too late, as night was fast approaching.

During Porter's inaction, Lee, observing a favorable opportunity to strike the Federal left wing, directed Longstreet to advance his troops at once. With that opinionativeness which he had pushed almost to the point of insubordination at Fair Oaks, and was to repeat on the second and third days at Gettysburg, this officer obstinately opposed his chief's wishes, and instead of vigorously attacking the weak force in front of him, confined himself, with Lee's reluctant consent, to a reconnaissance to secure a good position for an assault on the following morning. Had Pope fallen back, as he should have done, to the naturally strong line of Bull Run, and there awaited the appearance of the large reinforcements which he was expecting, Longstreet's action in practically refusing to carry out his com-

mander's orders would have given the battle of Second Manassas the character of a mere repulse of the Federal right wing by Jackson's corps. Another conflict on the line of Bull Run, with the Federal troops firmly entrenched, and greatly strengthened by the arrival of additional corps, might have been fatal to every prospect of Confederate success. As it was, the last day's battle was brought on simply by Pope's hallucination that the Confederate army was really retreating, and that, if vigorously pursued, might be overwhelmingly defeated.

It is a fact of great significance as touching the characters of his two principal lieutenants, that, previous to Jackson's death, Lee assigned all independent movements to that officer's leadership, while he himself always accompanied Longstreet's corps, as if he thought this to be the one requiring his immediate supervision. And yet, as we perceive from the record of the first day at Second Manassas, not even his presence, known wishes, and almost formal instructions, could overcome his subordinate's inveterate tardiness and his pertinacious loyalty to his own opinions. Unless Longstreet happened to assent fully to the advisability of the orders he received, he had, from the very beginning of his advancement to high command, a way of thwarting his chief's designs by his slowness and half-heartedness in executing them. This characteristic was fatal to the Confederate hopes at Fair Oaks; it might have been still more fatal at Second Manas-

sas; and was disastrous in the extreme at Gettysburg.

At dawn on August 31st, the Federals were seen to be massed on the rising ground situated directly in front of the Confederate position. Lee decided to allow Pope to begin the battle, and he was the more inclined to do this as he was momentarily expecting the arrival of D. H. Hill's, McLaws's and Walker's divisions, which had been left at Richmond to watch McClellan's last retiring movements. Pope still thought that Lee was not yet on the field, and that Jackson was falling back, an impression apparently confirmed by the discovery that, during the night, the latter had taken a new position in a wood further in the rear. At twelve o'clock, the first Federal line, composed of 20,000 men, was ordered to push forward in pursuit, while a body of 40,000 was concentrated behind them ready to march up to their support on the instant. Not satisfied with such great strength, Pope, still ignorant of the presence of Longstreet's corps, began to weaken his left by calling to the centre a large proportion of Porter's troops. As the Federal first line moved with great gallantry across an open meadow to assault the Confederates, that part of Jackson's corps in their immediate front advanced from its new station in the wood, and again planted itself behind the railway cuttings and embankments. Volleys in rapid succession were poured into the faces of the enemy as they came on, while their ranks were also torn and smashed by a terrific cross-

fire of artillery and musketry. In spite of the destruction thus caused, the Federals marched, with the firmest courage, up to the very muzzles of the Confederate guns; but the concentrated frontal and lateral fusillade now grew too deadly to be resisted, and they were forced to fall back. Twice the assault was renewed, with unsurpassed bravery, and as often repulsed. A like success was won by the remainder of Jackson's corps in another part of the field.

It was now four o'clock in the afternoon. Depressed by the failure of their previous attempts to capture the Confederate positions; discouraged by their heavy loss in killed and wounded; and exhausted by their exertions during two days of fighting, the Federals were indisposed to renew the battle. Lee promptly seized the opportunity for a great counterstroke. His right wing, commanded by Longstreet, having taken no part in the conflict, was eagerly holding itself in readiness to advance. An order was dispatched to Jackson to bring his corps in close touch with Longstreet's; and when this had been effected, the entire Confederate line, four miles in length, leaped forward simultaneously at a signal to drive the enemy from the field.

Every regiment, squadron, and battery in the Confederate army participated at first in the movement of the long gray ranks; but so rapidly did the infantry traverse the ground that the artillery was unable to keep up, a fact that had a vital influence on the ultimate issue of the battle. As if pressed

forward by an avalanche's irresistible weight, the Federals yielded position after position all along their front. Jackson succeeded in capturing Matthew Hill, situated only fourteen hundred yards from Stone Bridge, the main line of the Federal retreat over Bull Run. Had Longstreet also succeeded in capturing Henry Hill, access to the crossing would have been blocked from both sides, and a panic would probably have ensued in the already more or less confused masses of the retiring enemy. The absence of artillery made the attack on the last plateau futile in the face of the determined resistance. Darkness soon began to fall, and the Federals, cloaked by it, withdrew to Centreville, their confidence partially restored by the opportune arrival of 20,000 fresh troops under Sumner and Franklin, accompanied by abundant stores and supplies. Threatened next day with an attack in his rear, Pope retreated to Fairfax Court-House; and he escaped a disastrous defeat at Chantilly only by the intervention of a heavy thunder-storm, which, for a time, stopped operations on both sides. Still fearful lest he should be outflanked, he finally withdrew behind the fortifications of Alexandria.

With the exception of Chancellorsville, Second Manassas constitutes the greatest victory of General Lee's military career. Like Chancellorsville, it was a masterpiece of offensive strategy, and like Chancellorsville also, it was won by the prompt, energetic, daring, and skilful coöperation of "Stonewall" Jackson. Here for the first time on the same

field, the two Confederate generals are seen planning and striving together, not so much as superior and subordinate,—which was the relation they distinctly bore during the Peninsula campaign, where Jackson's conduct was unequal to his previous and after reputation,—but as the *alter ego* of each other, as a double executive but a single head. From the moment that Jackson broke camp on the Rappahannock, on the morning of August 25th, until the great counterstroke began on the second day at Manassas, he was operating on his own responsibility and on his own initiative. He was simply Lee's double in another part of the field, upon whose judgment and dexterity his superior relied with as great confidence as he did upon his own. When at Fredericksburg, "Stonewall" sent for instructions to Lee, who said, "Go, tell General Jackson that he knows as well what to do as I," one of the most generous compliments ever paid by a commander to a lieutenant.

The bold march to the enemy's rear at Manassas was the first great turning movement (unless the operations on Porter's right wing at Gaines' Mill can be so characterized) ever made by the Army of Northern Virginia; the last was at Chancellorsville. Lee never ventured upon such a stroke after Jackson's death because he knew that it required the qualifications possessed by that officer to carry it through successfully.

Lee has often been criticised for dividing his army before Second Manassas with the intention of unit-

ing it on the field of battle,—two operations that violated the fundamental maxims of the greatest of all masters of war, Napoleon. Success under such circumstances has been pronounced by Moltke to be the most brilliant of military achievements. It should be remembered, however, that Lee had a phenomenally energetic and resourceful lieutenant to carry out his design, and also a very rash and impulsive opponent to overcome,—one who, in his eagerness to capture the isolated corps, would, in all probability, leave Thoroughfare Gap open, or at least not take steps to close Aldie's Gap further north, by which "Stonewall" could easily retire beyond his grasp, should Lee fail to break through the mountain wall. Moreover, so important did both Lee and Jackson consider an assault upon Pope, before McClellan could come up, that they thought it not unwise to run serious risks in order to bring him to battle. By audacity alone could the numerical disparity between the two combatants be equalized, and it happened that an audacious policy was equally congenial to the tastes of both men.

Lee has also been censured for his failure completely to disperse the Federal troops during their retreat from Bull Run; but after Second Manassas, as after his later victories, reinforcements, hurried up with great promptness, soon restored the numerical superiority of the enemy. Had Lee broken up McClellan's army at Frazier's Farm, and no peace in consequence had followed, there was still Pope's army in northern Virginia to subdue; had he des-

troyed Pope at Second Manassas, McClellan was still behind the fortifications of Washington. Nevertheless, the general results of the operations from Gaines' Mill to Chantilly were calculated to inspire the Confederates with greater confidence and stimulate them to even greater efforts for the advancement of their cause. Practically, that mighty host, whose tramp had resounded from the Chickahominy to the Rapidan, had been driven beyond the confines of Virginia. By a dramatic reversal of positions, it was now not McClellan listening to the ringing bells and chiming clocks of Richmond, but Lee looking down from the hills of Fairfax on the flaming dome of the Capitol at Washington. During his last two campaigns, he had captured so many rifles of the most improved patterns that he was able to supply every soldier in his ranks with one : at Manassas alone, he had taken twenty thousand, in addition to thirty pieces of artillery ; had destroyed a vast quantity of stores and munitions of war ; had seized 7,000 prisoners ; and killed or wounded 13,500 men. Such success in the face of great numerical odds not unnaturally raised the *morale* of the Confederate army to a high pitch, while it correspondingly lowered that of the Federal.

Previous to these two campaigns, Mr. Davis's conviction that the Confederacy's proper military policy was to stand on the defensive had very generally prevailed. But it was now perceived that the Federals' vast numerical superiority was ultimately just as likely to overwhelm the Confederate

armies on Southern as on Northern soil; that the consequences of defeat were just as disastrous, while the consequences of victory were far less favorable to the Confederate cause, since the enemy was able to retreat to some protected base like Harrison's Landing or Washington. Moreover, it was now clearly recognized that the only hope of overcoming the disparity in number of men and in resources would be by beating the foe in detail, and the chances were hostile to the accomplishment of this purpose should that foe simply be awaited on Southern soil rather than sought for in the North.

So fixed was the North's determination to conquer the Confederacy it was unlikely that this feeling would be gradually weakened by a succession of defensive battles, which would only remotely bring home to the people the horrors of war. Both Lee and Jackson now thought that a decisive victory on Northern soil alone would ensure at one blow an acknowledgment of Southern independence. Jackson had held this opinion from the first; and if Lee had not done so as soon, his practical experience as commander-in-chief had soon driven him to the like conclusion. The time seemed ripe for such an invasion, now that the two Federal armies operating in the East had been assaulted in turn, and their *morale* sensibly lowered. These two armies, after the defeat at Second Manassas, had been merged under McClellan's leadership; but a very large proportion of the newly combined force consisted of recruits,

who, before their enlistment, had never fired a musket.

There were yet other reasons which seemed to make an invasion of the North the wisest course to adopt. In the first place, some conspicuous success in the East was needed to restore the Confederacy's declining fortunes on western fields. Owing to the increased strictness of the blockade, and the advance of the Federal fleets of gunboats up all the western rivers, there was a growing prospect that Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana, the chief provisioning department for the Southern armies, and an important recruiting ground, would be virtually lost to the cause. Moreover, an invasion of the North would compel the Federal government to withdraw the troops still stationed at Martinsburg and Harper's Ferry, thus leaving the Shenandoah Valley unexposed to incursions, and, therefore, free to send a great quantity of grain and beef for the support of Lee. It was also thought that the passage of the Potomac, the Federal army being pressed back, would encourage the people of Maryland openly to show their sympathy with the Confederacy by hurrying to reinforce the advancing columns, and aiding them with supplies of food, arms, and ammunition. Above all, it was hoped that the invasion, by carrying to the very doors of the Northern people, the perils and terrors of actual warfare, would tend to spread among them a spirit that would oppose all further attempts to conquer the South.

In the face of these different motives justifying an

invasion, there were several conditions calculated to discourage such a movement. Firstly, owing to the commissary department's deficiencies, the Confederate soldiers were wretchedly equipped for so exhausting a march; their shoes, when they had any at all, were, in consequence of the long tramps from Gaines' Mill to Second Manassas, worn almost to shreds, while their clothes were scanty and ragged. Secondly, a considerable number had been so often wounded in the previous series of battles that they ought properly to have been furloughed, or sent back to serve as a homeguard; a still greater number were suffering in health from the free use of green food snatched from corn-fields and orchards along the road and eaten raw. All needed rest after the two arduous campaigns just ended. Deficient clothing, lack of shoes, physical infirmities, great fatigue from previous marches,—all these drawbacks were certain to lower the men's efficiency while operating in a country never before explored by them, and one broken by mountain ranges and spurs.

Hardly had Lee crossed the Potomac, at the head of barely 55,000 troops, when the evil consequences of these unfortunate conditions began to show themselves. Thousands of soldiers, unable to keep up with the main body by reason of lacerated feet or diarrhetic weakness, straggled behind in its wake, until they were strung out all the way from the Potomac to Sharpsburg, in which battle hardly two-thirds of the original invading force took part. Those remaining in the ranks presented, in most in-

stances, an unkempt appearance for men of such extraordinary courage and constancy: their hats were brimless; their belts consisted of strands of rope; their shoes were rude moccasins fashioned out of rawhides; their coats and trousers when not hanging in tatters were, by exposure, stained to every color. It was an army of ragamuffins, but ragamuffins of undaunted hearts, the firmest nerves, and an unconquerable spirit; to whom discomforts were nothing in the scale, if by a keen eye in firing a musket, and a strong arm in wielding a sword, they could win the South's independence.

When Lee crossed the Potomac, Harper's Ferry was occupied by a Federal garrison of 8,000 men; he, however, confidently expected that, as he advanced toward Frederick and Hagerstown, these troops, recognizing their untenable position, would retire northward. During the operations in Virginia, the Alexandria and Orange Railroad had been used as the Confederate line of communication, but as soon as the army entered western Maryland, it became necessary to shift that line to the Shenandoah Valley. Should the Federal garrison remain at Harper's Ferry, its presence might interfere with the safe transportation of the Confederate recruits, ammunition, and other supplies, only conveyable to Shepperdstown by that route. When it was found that, in accord with orders from Washington,—unapproved, however, by McClellan,—the Federal troops would not be withdrawn, the question was presented to Lee whether or not he should reduce

the place before seeking battle with the forces of the enemy, now moving toward Frederick with great caution because unable to penetrate the screen formed by Stuart's cavalry. It would require 25,000 men to capture Harper's Ferry, and both Jackson and Longstreet were opposed to the army's division with the enemy so near at hand; and their view was doubtless the correct one. Nothing but the certainty that, by leaving the garrison undisturbed, the supply of ammunition would be cut off would have justified such an expedition. When Lee invaded Pennsylvania the following year, he did not endeavor to dislodge the force then holding the same post, and neither danger nor inconvenience resulted. Nor would either have done so now had he listened to his lieutenants' advice.

Exaggerating the importance of removing the obstruction, he thought that the expedition under consideration would be rendered safe, first, by the excessive caution and tardiness marking all McClellan's military operations; and, secondly, by the swiftness and energy characterizing Jackson in the performance of a dangerous enterprise. Lee argued that McClellan was now advancing with more than his usual slowness and timidity; that Stuart could be trusted to maintain for some time longer the screen which hid the Confederate movement from the enemy's view; and that, before the Northern commander could discover that the Confederate army had been divided, Jackson would be able, not only to reduce the garrison at Harper's Ferry, thus

removing all danger of the Southern line of communication being interrupted, but also to reunite his corps with the main body of the troops, awaiting his return at some convenient point west of South Mountain.

It is quite probable that Lee's hazardous plan would have been successfully carried out had not an unexpected incident occurred. As soon as he reached a decision, he sent to the several commanders copies of a general order touching the intended movements of the various parts of his army during the next few days. One of these copies, wrapped around a handful of cigars, was picked up by a Federal soldier, who, with his comrades, was occupying the site of D. H. Hill's recent encampment. This paper was at once delivered to McClellan and revealed to him, not only the proposed reduction of Harper's Ferry and the division of the Confederate forces, but also the position of every important detachment. "I have all the plans of the rebels," he exclaimed with natural exultation, "and will catch them in their own trap." Never in the course of the war was such an opportunity presented to a Federal commander for the destruction of the Army of Northern Virginia in the hour of its strength at one blow. Had McClellan advanced at once, he could quite probably have overwhelmed Longstreet's corps before Jackson had been able to hurry back from Harper's Ferry, and could then have turned upon Jackson's corps with equal success. But this military Hamlet, when all the cards were in his

hand, and the hour for prompt and energetic action had arrived, began characteristically to hesitate, as if he thought that the order was designed merely to deceive and mislead him.

Fortunately for the Confederate cause, Lee was informed of the lost paper's fate in less than fourteen hours after its discovery. At this moment, he himself was marching toward Hagerstown with Longstreet's corps. The crest of the South Mountain range, which lay between him and McClellan's advancing army, had already been occupied by Stuart's cavalry, while D. H. Hill's division was encamped at Boonesboro not far away. There were two gaps in the range, namely, Turner's and Crampton's, and if the Federals were to be held off at arm's length until Jackson could hasten back from Harper's Ferry, then both must be vigorously defended, so that McClellan, if not entirely stopped in his approach from the east, might at least be greatly delayed. That commander had received the copy of the lost order on September 13th, but it was not until the 14th that he began to move, and then by no means rapidly.

As soon as Lee knew his plans had been disclosed, he ordered Longstreet to retrograde to South Mountain for Stuart's and D. H. Hill's support; but before that officer could traverse the distance, which he did with characteristic slowness, consuming ten hours in making thirteen miles, the Confederates and Federals had come in conflict in both the passes. It was particularly important that Crampton Gap

should be blocked, as its opening would at once allow McClellan to throw a heavy force across the roads by which Jackson's corps would seek to reach the main army. By five o'clock in the afternoon, Franklin, at the head of a large detachment, had broken in and occupied the summit. In Turner's Gap, where, owing to Longstreet's arrival, the numerical disparity was not so great, the Confederates were able to hold their ground until darkness fell. The day's advantage for their side was that the Federal advance had been delayed twenty-four hours, but this had been gained only by the loss of 3,400 men, the temporary rupture of many regiments and a distinct lowering of the *morale* of that part of the Confederate army, which was further depressed by the retreat at night to the line of Antietam Creek. The sense of defeat was, however, soon largely counterbalanced by the news of Jackson's success. As Lee was taking position at Sharpsburg, he was informed that his lieutenant, having captured Harper's Ferry with 12,520 prisoners, 13,000 small arms, and seventy-three pieces of artillery, was hurrying forward to rejoin him.

Lee now debated whether it would not be best for him to withdraw his troops across the Potomac and take an entrenched position in Virginia. The section engaged had not yet fully recovered from the depression caused by their discomfiture at South Mountain; the ranks of the entire army had been seriously depleted by straggling; and the whole of the corps sent to Harper's Ferry was still absent.

Above all, the ground he now occupied was marked by what might prove to be a fatal disadvantage. A large river, not easily fordable, flowed just back of his position, and defeat would mean, if not the destruction of his whole force, the loss of all his artillery. Longstreet, wisely on the whole, urged retreat. Jackson, on the contrary, favored making a firm stand, and Lee, being of the same bold temper, so decided.

Their reasons for adopting a course apparently so imprudent were, first, that the Confederate army was composed altogether of veteran troops, whilst the Federal consisted either of raw recruits, or of men who had been defeated in the Peninsula and Second Manassas campaigns. Secondly, that the Confederate artillery, having been recently reorganized, was never before in so efficient a condition. Thirdly, that, if a victory should be won, the Federal troops could be pursued to far more advantage than after Second Manassas, when they had Washington's fortifications to retire behind for protection, and a second army to come to their assistance ; even the fall of the capital, Baltimore, and Philadelphia might follow, with overwhelming political as well as military consequences. Fourthly, that the Confederates were at this time highly successful in the West : a victory in the East would redouble the North's despondency, and by strengthening the peace party, render the issue of the approaching Federal elections unfavorable to the war's continuation ; cause an immediate diminution in the Federal Western forces

in the effort to increase the Eastern, a fact that would make it easier for General Bragg to clear Tennessee, and even Kentucky, of invaders; and, by removing the Federal pressure on Maryland, encourage that state to send thousands of recruits to the Southern army. Fifthly, that, as it would be a tacit confession of defeat for the Confederate troops to retreat across the Potomac without giving battle, the general effect of the movement, in depressing the Southern and elating the Northern people, would be almost as marked as if those troops had been beaten in the field. And, finally, that McClellan would be left undisturbed to strengthen his forces, until, on the resumption of hostilities, the disproportion in Federal favor would be far greater than it was even now.

The country lying between Boonesboro and Sharpsburg consisted of corn and meadow land, intersected by excellent roads. Had McClellan advanced in force promptly and energetically, he might have attacked the Confederate position by noon of the 15th, a time when little resistance could have been offered. Not until then did even his skirmishers appear. By the following morning, his army was on the ground, but, during the day, he was so busy in placing his different corps that it was sunset when he ordered two of them to cross the Antietam, which flowed between the opposing lines. In the meanwhile, the principal part of Jackson's corps had arrived on the field, after an exhausting night march. Hill, with several thou-

sand men, still remained at Harper's Ferry. Had McClellan attacked with vigor even by noon of the 16th, the movement would have been sure of success. As it was, he was that day content simply to prepare for an assault on the next. Apparently, he thought his slowness would, in the end, be compensated for by his greatly superior force; as his cavalry and infantry numbered 87,164 men, supported by 276 guns, while the Confederates numbered only 35,000 infantry, and 4,000 cavalry, supported by but 194 guns. McClellan, however, perhaps not unwisely, weakened his actual fighting strength by holding in reserve a very large section of his army to resist his antagonist's forward movement, if he himself was unsuccessful in front, or to make a great counterstroke, should his own advanced corps triumph.

Lee had posted his army to extraordinary advantage on the opposite heights of Sharpsburg. His right was stationed about a mile southeast of the town; and from this point, his line of battle ran parallel to the turnpike uniting Sharpsburg with Hagerstown. On the left, the line curved back, in the form of a rough angle, until it reached the Potomac. Owing to a great bend in that stream, both the right and left wings rested on the river. The Antietam, which flowed in front of the greater part of the line, was crossed by four bridges. It was by the one situated on the extreme Confederate left that the two Federal corps advanced after sunset on the 16th. Their passage was unopposed, and at a

point not far beyond the creek, they bivouacked, with the intention of attacking Jackson's corps, which formed the Confederate left wing, next morning. The original plan adopted by McClellan was first to assault that wing with a heavy force ; if the movement succeeded, to follow it up with an assault by his left on the Confederate right ; and if that also succeeded, then to drive his centre against the Confederate centre.

The battle began at sunrise with the advance of Hooker's corps ; and so fierce was the ensuing conflict that this officer afterward stated that the corn growing over a part of the ground, thirty acres in extent, was cut down by the bullets as if by the blade of a scythe. By half-past seven o'clock, his troops had been worsted, but the other corps, under Mansfield, moving forward, succeeded in forcing Jackson to fall back to a second position, where his line, instead of being bent, as formerly, into an angle exposed to cross fire, was almost straight, and, therefore, more easily defended. Owing to McClellan's general plan, Lee, not being anxious for his left and centre, was able to dispatch heavy reinforcements to Jackson's aid ; but this accession of strength was counterbalanced by the arrival of 18,000 fresh Federal troops, who at once renewed the battle. This detachment being thrown into confusion by an unexpected attack, the Confederates rushed forward as the whole Federal line wavered ; but just as they were most disorganized by their own rapid advance, they were confronted by two

fresh Federal brigades, and subjected to a hot artillery fire. Stopped in their course, they were forced to withdraw to their former position. This ended the contest on the left, where 30,000 Federal troops, supported by 100 guns, had been foiled, and, for a short time, swept back in rout by 20,000 Confederates, supported by forty guns.

His right wing having failed, McClellan, instead of ordering his left to attack next, as originally planned, pushed forward his centre, which soon drove Longstreet back to the turnpike situated in his rear; but here that officer doggedly planted his foot, and as the Federals, being unsupported, were unable to dislodge him, the opposing forces in this quarter spent the rest of the day in a state of inaction. Burnside, in command of the extreme left wing, was now ordered to move. After much delay, three of his divisions succeeded in crossing the Antietam on that side of the field, and taking positions on the ridge situated just beyond it. Having thus outflanked the Confederate right, they began to roll the opposing line back upon Sharpsburg. Had this movement continued, the larger part of the Confederate army would have been in imminent danger of being huddled up in hopeless confusion; but from this peril it was saved by A. P. Hill's opportune arrival at the head of 3,000 men, who, assaulting the Federals in reverse, not only stopped their advance, but also compelled them to retreat across the Antietam.

Thus ended the battle of Sharpsburg, for the time

it lasted the most sanguinary of the whole war. The loss in killed and wounded amounted to sixteen per cent. of the entire forces engaged on both sides. It is related that the Federal patrol passing into a field where the fighting had been especially desperate imagined, in the veiling darkness of the night, that they had surprised a Confederate brigade. "There in the shadow of the woods lay the skirmishers, their muskets beside them; and there, in regular ranks, lay the line of battle sleeping, as it seemed, the profound sleep of utter exhaustion. But the first man that was touched was cold and lifeless, and the next and the next. It was the bivouac of the dead."

A Confederate council of war was held after the close of the battle. Even Jackson advised retreat into Virginia. Having listened quietly to the expression of each lieutenant's opinion, Lee rose in his stirrups, and said: "Gentlemen, we will not cross the Potomac to-night. If McClellan wants to fight in the morning, I will give him battle again." The only precaution which he took was to draw a part of his line back to a range of hills situated west of Sharpsburg, a position more defensible than the one previously occupied. Having been joined next day by six or seven thousand stragglers, he considered his army sufficiently strong to adopt the offensive, and it was only when he found, by the report of Colonel S. D. Lee, one of his most capable artillery officers, that the extreme Federal right wing's position,—the only position possibly turnable,—was too formi-

dable to be outflanked, that he abandoned all thought of the initiative. Informed during the day that McClellan was receiving heavy reinforcements, and expecting none himself, he, that night, retired across the Potomac, without the loss of a gun or wagon, and with no serious attempt on his antagonist's part to interrupt or confuse the movement.

Sharpsburg was as distinctly a Confederate as Malvern Hill had been a Federal victory; in each case, the party repulsing an attack finally retreated. In its larger aspects, however, this battle was a Confederate defeat; it checked the invasion of the North, from which so much to the South's political and military benefit was expected to follow, and it gave Mr. Lincoln a favorable opportunity to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. Lee himself was not dissatisfied with the general results; if, for no other reason, because it showed that he could rely on his soldiers' valor in the teeth of the most disheartening odds, and on their firmness and constancy even when their most sanguine hopes were frustrated. From a tactical point of view, Sharpsburg was, in some respects, the greatest of his military achievements; not only in the beginning had he posted his troops to the utmost advantage for repelling the assaults of an enemy so much superior in number, but during the course of the battle, in spite of the hostile masses of infantry and artillery in front of his whole line, he had moved detachments from point to point where the need of their aid was most pressing. His right wing alone had been in a

very critical position because that was the last attacked, when his resources in fresh troops on the ground had been exhausted.

McClellan's management of his army had shown far less skill. He attacked, not in combination, but in succession, and in succession was repulsed. He really fought three different battles, and from the beginning to the end of the conflict only two-thirds of his army was engaged. Like Hooker at Chancellorsville, he was thinking less of winning a victory than of guarding his army from a possible rout.

CHAPTER VII

FREDERICKSBURG AND CHANCELLORSVILLE

After crossing the Potomac, Lee drew back to the neighborhood of Winchester. McClellan, with characteristic prudence, did not attempt to follow at once, although urged to do so by Mr. Lincoln, now doubly anxious for the Federal army to win a victory, as it would silence those persons at the North who condemned the Emancipation Proclamation. Here, as after Gettysburg, the Federal President overlooked the fact that the commander on the ground, with practical experience of the Confederates' power of resistance in the face of an almost overwhelming preponderance, was the best judge as to the wisest course to pursue. McClellan at once began to reorganize and strengthen his forces, and whilst thus busy, Stuart made a raid entirely around his encampments to find out whether he was taking steps to send a special detachment against Richmond. None such being reported, Lee decided to remain quiet until his antagonist's plan was revealed; whether it should be to cross the Potomac west of the Blue Ridge, and move straight up the Shenandoah Valley in the Confederate army's track, or to pass between that army and Richmond by marching east of the Ridge toward Culpeper and Gordonsville.

McClellan determined to follow the latter course, and by the end of October, his forces were concentrated near Warrenton. As soon as the Federal troops crossed the Potomac, Lee advanced Longstreet's corps over the mountains to Culpeper, but retained Jackson's in the Valley. The two were thus posted sixty miles apart. Once more, he had divided his forces practically in the presence of the enemy, now numbering 125,000 men, supported by 320 guns. Not less than 225,000 Federal soldiers were at this time stationed within two or three days' journey of Washington, and if necessary, could be merged in one body at short notice. To prevent this great host from combining and beginning an aggressive campaign, with Richmond as its immediate goal, Lee kept Jackson in a position where he could at any moment rush down the Valley, pass the Blue Ridge, cut the Federal line of communication, and even attack Washington.

The mere possibility of such an invasion would make the Federal commander doubly slow and cautious in advancing southward. Lee was again seeking to neutralize in a measure his opponent's numerical advantage by playing upon his fears and sense of prudence. Should McClellan after all decline to be stopped by Jackson's threatened rupture of his line of communication, then Lee could easily draw Longstreet back to Gordonsville, where Jackson's corps would, in a few days, be able to join him by a march across the mountains.

Before McClellan could advance from Warrenton,

he was superseded by Burnside, one of his lieutenants, an act that was to cost the Federal cause dear. In spite of his excessive prudence and slowness, his inveterate disposition to exaggerate his opponent's strength, and a certain boyish superciliousness and tactlessness in dealing with Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Stanton, McClellan was at this time the ablest, most experienced, and most popular Federal officer in the East. He had taken command of the Federal army when the war was a novelty and the fighting power had to be organized and set in motion. His super-caution was excusable when it is recalled that Washington's safety was absolutely dependent upon his army's success in foiling all the efforts of the Confederacy's two greatest soldiers, Lee and Jackson, to capture that city, which would have carried with it vast political consequences, such as the certain discouragement of the North, the probable intervention of foreign powers, and the possible early recognition of Southern independence. Sharpsburg was practically an important Federal victory, even if it did not save the Union, as McClellan asserted, and on that account, if on no other, he was entitled to less summary treatment.

If it was a mistake to remove so capable an officer at this critical moment, that mistake assumed a still more serious character when Burnside, a man of many winning personal qualities, but one who justly thought himself incompetent for so responsible a post, was appointed in his place. The new com-

mander's first act reflected a degree of prudence even greater than that his predecessor had shown: —he abandoned the plan of marching upon Richmond by way of Culpeper and Gordonsville for that of advancing by way of Fredericksburg; nor was this unwise, for by making Acquia Creek on the Potomac his base of supply, he removed at a stroke all danger of Jackson's cutting his line of communication.

The question now arose, Should the Confederate army be concentrated on the southern heights overlooking Fredericksburg in order to oppose the Federal passage of the Rappahannock, or should it be posted in an entrenched position behind the North Anna River, there to await the enemy's arrival? Every strategic consideration led Lee and Jackson to favor the latter course. At the North Anna, the Federal troops would be thirty-six miles farther away from their base. It is true that the chance of a counterstroke there would not have been much greater than at Fredericksburg, owing to the Federal superiority in number of men and guns; nor would repeated attacks upon the retreating rear-guard have caused serious losses. But the Federal army, if defeated at North Anna would, in falling back, have to traverse a more or less open country, and in doing so, would, in the confusion of their withdrawal, find it difficult to protect their line of communication from a flank march, or to beat off fierce assaults upon their wings. In such a retreat, Jackson and Stuart could have swept

around to their front, striking hard at every step, while Lee and Longstreet pressed relentlessly upon the centre from behind. The worst depression which the North felt during the whole period of the war was caused by the defeat at Fredericksburg. How much greater that depression would have been, had the Army of the Potomac met with another Gaines' Mill, followed, not by a Frazier's Farm, but by an overwhelming Confederate victory.

In concentrating at Fredericksburg, Lee could look forward to reaping few fruits of victory, should one be gained there. The line of hills situated on the Rappahannock's north bank furnished, not only a position for the use of artillery in resisting a counterstroke, but also a refuge for defeated troops retreating from the plains below. Moreover, it would be impossible for a Confederate detachment to outflank the discomfited enemy, safe across the river once more, or to cut their line of communication with Acquia Creek. At Fredericksburg, the cavalry's fierce energy would have to chafe in inaction, while even the infantry's impetuosity must be put under partial restraint. There was but one reason to doubt the advisability of concentrating behind the North Anna: would Burnside so late in the season (for it was now December) advance as far toward Richmond as that stream? Lee argued that he would, because he had been appointed to press the Federal operations with extraordinary vigor in response to the North's impatience.

Unfortunately for the Confederacy, Mr. Davis

still clung to the idea that a purely defensive policy was the wisest one; that the soundest hope of Southern independence lay in the chance of foreign intervention; and that military should bend to political considerations. An additional reason which led him to disapprove of the concentration on the North Anna was that a wide area of country rich in supplies of food would be left open to Federal invasion. It was to be expected, however, that, should Burnside be driven back, his occupation of this region would be only temporary, and that he would also be too busy with his campaign to make sweeping incursions. Every interest of the Confederacy required that the judgment of Lee and his lieutenants should prevail in such a crisis, and that military should override political reasons. There was but one ground of hope for the Southern people in their struggle for independence, namely, the success of their armies. The anticipation of foreign aid was a mere hallucination. There is just reason to think that the Confederacy would have fared far better on several occasions, and this was one of them, had Lee shown more firmness in insisting that the strategical demands of the situation should be paramount. We have seen that he sometimes yielded to his corps commanders' unseasonable opposition to his wishes, as, for instance, to Longstreet's at Second Manassas. Apparently, his sense of subordination to Mr. Davis as the government's military and civil head alike, was so strong that he never seriously antagonized, as Jackson would undoubtedly have done, the military

measures of that too masterful and self-confident executive; and the consequence was that now, as after Cold Harbor later on, the Confederate cause suffered.

Before December had fairly set in, Burnside had concentrated his army at Falmouth opposite Fredericksburg. In a short time, Stafford Heights, which, from the north bank below the town, commanded the plain on the south bank, had been entrenched and armed with heavy artillery to assist the Federal forces when they should cross the river to attack the Confederate position on the southern line of hills. These hills, which possessed great natural strength, being broken by ravines and streams, extended about six miles, at a distance from the Rappahannock ranging from 1,500 to 3,000 yards. Longstreet's corps occupied the ground nearest the town, with his centre resting on Marye's Heights. Jackson, at first stationed near the river's lower reaches, moved up before the battle began, and joined hands with Longstreet's right wing. The latter was strongly fortified; rifle pits and shelter trenches had been dug along his front, which was also protected by abatis. Jackson, on the other hand, after changing his position, did not have time to throw up earthworks.

Lee would not have prevented the Federal army from crossing the river even if it had been in his power to do so. An assault on the Confederate position was almost certain to be repulsed, and should the Federal troops fall back in great confusion, there would be a chance of delivering a successful counter-

stroke in spite of the artillery fire from Stafford Heights. Burnside's first intention was to pass the Rappahannock by the fords above the town, and attack the Confederate flank and rear ; but concluding that his advance from that quarter might be stopped at the stream, he decided upon a frontal assault. On December 11th, a Federal detachment attempted to throw a pontoon bridge over the river opposite Fredericksburg, a purpose for a time frustrated by Barksdale's brigade of Mississippians, which withdrew only after the town had been fiercely bombarded and four regiments had crossed. Three additional bridges having been laid down over the stream's lower reaches, six corps were able to pass by the morning of the 13th and take position on the ground beyond, while a large body of troops under Hooker was held in reserve on the north side. Having seen from his signal stations that Jackson was separated from Longstreet by a wide gap (for at this time the two had not joined hands), Burnside planned to strike the former a blow before the latter could give aid, and then strike the latter in turn ; but, as already stated, Jackson, before the first blow was delivered, had posted his corps close to Longstreet's right wing.

When the Federals, in two great bodies, under Franklin and Sumner respectively, began their march across the plain, the whole landscape was veiled in a heavy fog. The Confederates from the southern heights could at first distinguish no objects below them, but they could hear the sound of the

regular footfall of the approaching ranks, the dull roll of the artillery wheels, the quick and sharp words of command, and the soft swell of martial music. Soon the sun began to dispel the mist, and a stirring panorama was revealed ; across the plain, 85,000 troops were seen advancing, as if participating in some grand parade, with bayonets shining in the morning light, and regimental flags flaunting the breeze above a sea of dark blue uniforms. In the background, there rolled away to the horizon the sere or blackened landscapes of early winter, broken toward Stafford Heights by great wreaths of white smoke as the cannon there hurled projectiles over the heads of the Federal hosts against the Confederates' elevated position.

Jackson had massed his 30,000 men in three lines, one behind another, with a front of twenty-six hundred yards, strengthened by a succession of batteries. There was but one weak point : near his right centre, a coppice projected from the wood where most of his troops were posted, and ran down the slope about a quarter of a mile. This coppice was undefended because supposed to be too much of a brake and a marsh to be penetrated by hostile troops.

To Franklin had been assigned the duty of attacking Jackson's corps. Thinking that only a small part of that corps occupied the hills next to Longstreet's position, he halted his division, 55,000 strong, in the plain, and sent Meade forward, with only 4,500 men, to drive a wedge between the two

Confederate wings. The progress of this detachment was stopped for some time by Captain Pelham, of Stuart's horse artillery, who, turning two guns against their ranks, continued to shoot until his ammunition was exhausted, when he was forced to retire. Meade then advanced under the protection of a heavy artillery fire, but was soon driven back by the unexpected outburst of Jackson's line of frontal batteries. Again Meade advanced, reinforced by Gibbon, and supported by the main body of the Federal artillery close up on his right and left. Entering the projecting and undefended coppice, he quickly pushed through and fell on the Confederate troops posted on one side of it, while Gibbon, following him, fell on those posted on the other side. The Confederate first line was thrown into confusion, and the second was about to share the same fate, when Jackson ordered his third to advance and clear the wood. Exhausted, unsupported, reduced in number, and disorganized by the pursuit and the intricacies of the ground, the Federals were forced back by this movement. Six Confederate brigades followed them down the slope with a rush, and were stopped only by the fire of the concentrated Federal artillery. Meade and Gibbon had lost 4,000 men in killed and wounded.

During the progress of these operations, Sumner, whose division numbered 35,000 men, had been assaulting Marye's Heights, a position practically impregnable. Its foot was protected by a stone wall, and its slope by rifle pits and batteries, tier upon

tier, while it could be approached only across open ground fully exposed to artillery and musketry fire. Against this position, strengthened by all that art and nature could supply, two Federal corps, with a degree of courage never surpassed in the history of warfare, threw themselves, only to fall back after suffering an appalling loss; indeed, two of every five men belonging to the attacking column had been killed or wounded. A second assault was also repulsed, but the Federal troops again fell back in good order. By three o'clock, Franklin's and Sumner's divisions, shattered and disheartened, had retired beyond the range of the Confederate artillery.

Why was no counterstroke delivered as at Second Manassas? If delivered at all, it must have been done before the Federals, having recovered from the confusion of their defeat, could strengthen their lines for resistance; and it must also have been done by the whole Confederate army acting in concert to the very minute. In the first place, no previous arrangement for a counterstroke had been made by holding back a body of fresh troops to head the movement; and, in the second, Jackson and Longstreet were so widely separated that neither could know at once what had occurred in either's front; nor could Lee keep them informed, owing to the battle-field's extensive area and the obstructions to the view. A simultaneous advance was impracticable and if disjointly made, the movement was certain to end in disaster. Moreover, Lee had to reckon with the batteries stationed on Stafford Heights, which, un-

less the pursuers could commingle with the pursued, would be able to fire upon them with deadly effect. Nor was the presence of the river in the Federal rear likely to be a Confederate advantage, since the stream, being crossed by four bridges, really afforded four different exits from the plain.

Lee, so far from thinking of a counterstroke the first day, prepared himself against a second assault; and this he again expected the next day when he found that the Federals had not retreated from the plain. Had this second assault been made and badly repulsed, he had planned to follow it up with a counterstroke, to be delivered so quickly as to disconcert the fire of the artillery across the river. It was not until the third night after the battle that the enemy withdrew to the north side of the Rappahannock.

Thus ended the battle of Fredericksburg, a victory which proved, as both Lee and Jackson had anticipated, to be barren of any real fruit, owing to the Federals' ability to fall back without endangering their flanks or their line of communication. Had the Confederates been fighting for time, Fredericksburg would have been highly useful to their cause, but what they really sought was the destruction of the Army of the Potomac. No permanent advantage had resulted from the Peninsula Campaign, or from Second Manassas, and none would result from Fredericksburg, for the same reason;—namely, the Federal army would, in a few months, be able to resume the field, with every vacancy in

its ranks filled up by a new recruit, and with every captured cannon replaced by a new piece of artillery. The knowledge of their continued numerical superiority alone would be sufficient to restore the courage of the defeated troops. Men who could charge right up to the muzzles of their enemy's guns, as the Federals had done at Second Manassas and Marye's Heights, were not less brave and steadfast than the Southerners who had resisted them. Give them equally skilful leaders, and their very numbers would probably overwhelm all opposition.

No one was more clearly aware than Lee himself that the Confederate reserves in men and supplies were steadily declining, and that barren victories would deplete the remaining resources almost as thoroughly as modified defeats. Purely defensive measures were no more in accord with his judgment than they were with Jackson's, for both knew that such measures would never bring the North to terms, and that the only hope of doing so must lie either in the destruction of the Army of the Potomac on Southern, or in its decisive defeat on Northern, ground.

With these convictions, Lee, visiting Richmond, laid before Mr. Davis a plan for an aggressive campaign north of the Potomac as soon as the spring should open. Had this plan been carried out at that time, he would have had Jackson's invaluable assistance, and both would have been able to profit by the mistakes made during the first invasion of

Maryland. Lee found Mr. Davis under the impression that the Northern people were so discouraged by the repulse at Fredericksburg that they would soon abandon the contest; and that, before thirty days had passed, the Confederacy's independence would be recognized by foreign powers. He did not share this delusion. It is quite possible that he would have moved northward in the spring without Mr. Davis's entire approval had not Longstreet, with three divisions, been withdrawn from his army after the battle of Fredericksburg in order to protect Richmond, supposed to be threatened with invasion by way of Newberne, N. C., and Suffolk, Va. When the campaign of Chancellorsville opened, Longstreet was engaged in an injudicious expedition against the latter place, and by his absence prevented Lee, not only from marching toward the Potomac, but also from deriving any more advantage from the victory of Chancellorsville than from the one gained at Fredericksburg. The drawback which diminished the force of all his greatest successes, namely, the lack of a sufficient number of men to follow them up promptly and energetically, was here exaggerated to a degree never before or afterward equaled.

The winter of 1862–3 was passed in quiet by both armies: the one posted on the heights north of Fredericksburg; the other on the line of hills situated south of the town. Burnside was soon superseded by Hooker, an officer so pugnacious that he was known by the sobriquet of "Fighting Joe," a

reputation confirmed by his boldness in the early half of the approaching campaign, but lessened by his over-caution in the latter part. He soon had under his command an army of 130,000 men, which he esteemed so highly that he pronounced it "the finest on the planet." His artillery service embraced 428 guns. To oppose this host so completely armed, Lee could marshal barely 57,000 men and 170 guns. The disparity was even greater than in the campaign of Sharpsburg.

As soon as spring opened, Hooker took the final steps to carry out the plan of operations which he had matured; and had it been executed with the ability and boldness with which it was conceived, it might have led to a great Federal triumph. Prudently rejecting the suggestion that he should throw his whole force across the river below Fredericksburg, and make a frontal assault on Lee's entrenchments, he decided to divide his army into three parts for three separate attacks. The first, consisting of his cavalry under Stoneman, 10,000 strong, was ordered to advance to Gordonsville to cut the Confederate line of communication with the Valley over the Central Railway; and having accomplished this, to march to the rear of Lee's centre, with a view to breaking connections with Richmond by way of the Fredericksburg Railway. The second part consisting of a large body of troops under Sedgwick, was ordered, after crossing the Rappahannock some distance down stream, to hold the Confederate right wing in its position until the third

part, under the commander-in-chief himself, could pass over by the upper fords and strike Lee in the rear of his left. It was hoped that the Confederates would be crushed between the upper and nether millstones of Hooker and Sedgwick, while Stoneman would shut off the fugitives from their only road of retreat.

Hooker did not consider the division of his army injudicious, as one wing of it alone was stronger than all Lee's forces combined, while the other was nearly as strong. Sedgwick led across the river at least 40,000 men and Hooker at least 70,000; in addition, 11,000 were stationed at Banks' Ford on the north side in easy reach, while the Third Corps was so posted that it could come to the aid of either Hooker or Sedgwick according to the greater need.

By the night of April 30th, the Fifth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Corps had been concentrated at Chancellorsville, a spot about ten miles southwest from Fredericksburg. The surrounding country having once been a mining district, the original forest had been cut down to supply the furnaces, and its place had been taken by a dense growth of scrubby oaks, pines, and chinquapins. It was a wild and lonely brake spreading out twenty miles in one direction and fifteen in the other, and broken only here and there by a small narrow field under cultivation. A few roads, some running southwest toward Gordonsville, and others north toward the Rappahannock's upper fords, intersected this gloomy region;

but the principal passages were merely rude tracks made in hauling the wood used in smelting.

Chancellorsville, represented by a single farmhouse, possessed no strategic importance beyond the fact that several public roads converged at that point. Here, as elsewhere in this vast thicket, the environment was entirely unsuitable for military operations. In getting his army so far, Hooker had shown both skill and energy, although the movement did not quite deserve his public characterization as a "succession of splendid achievements." "Our enemy," he announced in a proclamation, "must either ingloriously fly, or come out from behind his defenses and give us battle on our own ground, where certain destruction awaits him." And in private conversation, he declared with confidence that "the Confederate army was the legitimate property of the Army of the Potomac." To overcome the obstructions to reconnaissances, he had established signal stations on every high point, and had sent up three captive balloons; while, by means of a telegraph line to Falmouth, he promptly obtained full knowledge of every Confederate movement on the hills south of Fredericksburg.

Stuart, who had wisely refrained from following Stoneman, kept Lee thoroughly informed of the Federal right wing's advance. What course should he pursue? If he remained quietly where he was, it was a matter of only a few hours before Hooker would fall in overwhelming force on his flank. The Confederate army could not strike the Federal line

of communication with Acquia Creek because it would be practically impossible to cross the river below Fredericksburg in the teeth of Sedgwick and the strong fortifications on Stafford Heights, still occupied by the enemy. Hooker confidently anticipated that Lee would retreat to the North Anna; and perhaps it would have been wiser had he done so. But he never retreated before the battle was fought. The only question which now seriously distracted him was, Which should he strike first, Sedgwick or Hooker?

In the beginning Jackson was in favor of concentrating the whole Confederate army, and hurling it against Sedgwick's column, which had now crossed the river. Although Lee preferred that Hooker should be attacked first, so great was his confidence in his lieutenant's judgment that he finally consented to a change of plan; but after a more careful inspection of the ground, Jackson acknowledged the correctness of his chief's original view. No sooner was this conclusion reached than steps were taken by the two for the obstruction of Hooker's further advance, if not for his overthrow. The first was to turn the faces of the bulk of the Confederate troops toward Chancellorsville; the second to station Early, with 10,000 men, on Marye's Heights, with orders to block the way for Sedgwick, or at least to delay his progress until the main Federal army had been defeated. History furnishes few examples of a movement equal in audacity to this one:—the advance of an army of 45,000 men against one of

70,000, with another of 40,000 in the Confederate rear eager to pursue and attack.

On the morning of May 1st, the day following the concentration of Hooker's army at Chancellorsville, a heavy mist, falling upon the face of the country, shut out the view from signal station and captive balloon; and under its cloak, Jackson, was able, without being observed, to join the force which Lee had thrown back from his left wing toward Chancellorsville to oppose Hooker's expected approach from that point. This force had already erected a line of earthworks and logs along the crest of a wooded ridge looking out over a contracted area of open fields,—a position naturally strong and easily defended toward the west, as it allowed the Confederate artillery to sweep the ground in that quarter, and gave the Federals little room for deploying their guns. Should Sedgwick, however, beat down Early's resistance, he would be able to attack in the rear simultaneously with Hooker's assault in front. Jackson perceived this weakness as soon as he came up, and at once ordered the troops to abandon the works and advance toward Chancellorsville by the two roads running in that direction through the labyrinth of gloomy thickets.

Hooker had by this time decided to discontinue the offensive movement so successfully carried out as far as Chancellorsville. He was no longer marching toward Fredericksburg, but instead had taken a strong position in the midst of the vast undergrowth, to which he had retrograded as soon as informed of the

check to his vanguard caused by Jackson's approach in force. His left wing now rested on the Rappahannock ; the Second Corps held the turnpike uniting Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg ; the Twelfth, forming the centre, protected Chancellorsville itself ; the Third occupied Hazel Grove, an open plateau situated west, southwest of that point ; while on the extreme right of the right wing was stationed the Eleventh Corps. The line was shaped like an obtuse angle : one division of it fronted directly toward the east ; the other toward the south. The breastworks consisted of logs piled together, with abatis blocking the approaches. The few roads running straight to the fortifications were commanded by the full sweep of the artillery fire.

Hooker, though assisted by his balloons and signal stations, was nevertheless greatly hampered by his cavalry's absence, to which fact some of the timidity which he now exhibited after his first bold movement, was attributable. Lee, on the other hand, was admirably served at this critical juncture by Stuart, whose conduct throughout this campaign was marked by great prudence, sound judgment, and extraordinary energy.

Finding when he arrived before the enemy's lines, that Hooker had assumed a purely defensive attitude, and had no intention of abandoning it, Lee quietly sought to discover a weak point in the Federal position. He resembled a hunter, who, having driven his prey to bay, leisurely turns from side to side to detect the spot in its body most vulnerable

to the stroke of the knife. Such a spot was soon reported by his indefatigable horsemen. In skirting the extreme right, Fitzhugh Lee observed that that part of the Federal army was protected only from an attack in front. Struck on its exposed side, it might be driven back on the centre, to the certain confusion and possible rout of the entire army, and to the probable rupture of its line of retreat to the fords of the Rappahannock. To accomplish this, the Confederate forces would have to be divided on the field of battle, and under circumstances far more perilous than those attending the same manœuvre at Second Manassas; for here one-half of the Confederate army would have to sweep entirely across the Federal front to reach the point of attack on the extreme right. For the execution of so critical a movement, the country's peculiar character was very well suited, but in spite of the screen of thickets, the Federal outposts' suspicions might be aroused and the purpose of the march divined and thwarted. Lee, however, relied with confidence on the combined prudence and celerity with which Jackson would conduct it to ensure its success; and the result proved his anticipation to be correct. An interview between the two occurred on the night of May 1st in a grove of oak and pine, and here the general details of the proposed manœuvre were determined.

At four o'clock, the next morning, Jackson began the last and boldest of his flank marches. His force, consisting of 26,000 men, passed in review before

Lee, who, with his staff, had halted at the roadside. Gravely saluting his commander, Jackson stopped for a moment to exchange a few words, and then moved rapidly forward; thus was withdrawn forever from Lee's sight, one whom he had followed with so much chivalrous fidelity, that great lieutenant whose fame will always be interwoven with his own. The line of march first ran down a rude lumber road pointing southward toward the Catharine Furnace; thence west, southwest to the Brock Road pointing northward toward the Rappahannock; then up this highway to the turnpike making eastward toward Chancellorsville; and down this turnpike to the spot where the unsuspecting Eleventh Corps was stationed. The cavalry led the procession of infantry, which, in one great column ten miles long, was strung out across the Federal front.

It was with a sense of elation that the troops advanced. Although not yet aware of the goal their general had in view, they were nevertheless certain that some daring enterprise was on foot. As they marched on, they could hear behind them the roar of cannon as McLaws and Anderson, with 17,000 troops under Lee's own eye, demonstrated against the Federal lines in order to divert suspicion from the flanking column. But as that column passed south of the Hazel Grove plateau, its presence was detected by the Federal troops entrenched on that height, and information of the fact was sent to Hooker, who, because it was reported that the retiring troops were followed by a long train of wag-

ons, not unnaturally leaped to the conclusion that Lee had begun to retreat toward Gordonsville. It was supposed that he was taking this route because his line of withdrawal toward Bowling Green had been blocked by Sedgwick, who was also thought to be thundering in his rear. Nevertheless, Hooker was prudent enough to warn Slocum and Howard on the extreme right to guard against a flank attack. Sickles left the Federal breastworks and attempted to drive a wedge through the advancing column. Jackson hardly stopped to repel the assault; indeed, he was pleased to have caused it, as such a movement was likely to weaken the Federal extreme right, which in fact it did, by tempting Howard, who commanded there, to take part in it.

Having struck the Brock Road pointing north, the column wheeled sharply to the right, and moved by that route until it arrived at what was known as the Plank Road, one of the two public highways,—the turnpike being the other,—which ran parallel toward Chancellorsville. It had been Jackson's original intention to advance down this road until Howard's position was reached, and attacking the Federal army in reverse, to roll its left wing on its centre. He halted the column at the crossing, and accompanying Fitzhugh Lee to a neighboring hill, from thence saw the whole of Howard's corps reposing in the opening below, with no indication that the Confederates' presence was as yet even suspected. The men were gathered in small groups in the rear of the breastworks: some engaged in conversation;

others in smoking and playing cards; others in killing beeves, or preparing the evening meal.

Jackson, having decided to attack in the rear as well as on the flank, dispatched the largest section of his troops farther up the Brock Road to the point where it was crossed by the turnpike running toward Chancellorsville. The final movement then began; —while these troops advanced eastward along the turnpike, the cavalry and the "Stonewall Brigade," serving as a screen, also marched eastward along the parallel Plank Road. At the end of a mile, line of battle was formed. At this hour, Hooker, Howard, and Sickles were firmly convinced that Jackson was in full retreat. Hooker had, indeed, so telegraphed one of his corps commanders; but he was soon rudely undeceived. A few minutes brought the Confederates sharply upon the sentries of the extreme right, and raising a yell, they rushed forward through the undergrowth, sending the hares, foxes, and deer scurrying before them. The first Federal brigade to feel the impact was overwhelmed; the second, which bravely sought to stay the rout, was dispersed. The first position was now captured, but the advance did not pause. By seven o'clock, the whole of the Eleventh Corps had been driven back in great confusion toward the centre.

Jackson had now pressed his column forward in the rear of the Federal army to a point only a mile and a half distant from Chancellorsville, and barely half a mile from a road debouching into the only highway by which the Federal troops could draw

back to the fords of the Rappahannock. If the latter road could be seized, as seemed practicable, owing to the fact that Sickles in the centre had that morning marched so far southward in order to interrupt the Confederate movement, then Jackson could plant himself firmly behind the enemy, while Lee occupied a like position in front. Nor would the Federal predicament be greatly modified by the presence of the reserves at the fords in Jackson's rear. The situation would then have been highly dramatic: first, Jackson standing between the Federal reserves and Hooker; next, Hooker, between Jackson and Lee, and last, Lee, between Hooker and Sedgwick. But the flanking column in advancing through the dense undergrowth became so disorganized by the rapid pursuit in the now fast-falling darkness that it was found necessary to reform the line before the march upon the road leading to the fords could be resumed. While this was going on, Jackson, accompanied by members of his staff, rode forward to reconnoitre. It was now eight o'clock, and the rising moon dimly lighted up the intricacies of the wood, but not sufficiently to allow objects to be distinguished clearly even at a short distance. Returning, the small body of horsemen received full in the face a volley of musketry from a company which had mistaken them for Federal skirmishers.

So seriously was Jackson wounded that on being brought within his own lines, he was unable to give any further orders. His chief lieutenant, A. P.

Hill, also had been disabled; and his guide, Boswell, killed. No one was aware of the commander's plans, and the whole corps had to be halted until Stuart, many miles away, had been summoned to assume direction. It was then too late to press forward to the road running to the fords. Howard took advantage of the long delay to recall Sickles, and the two, reforming and strengthening their lines, were able to bar the further advance that night of the fatigued Confederate column.

By dawn next morning (May 3d), new Federal breastworks had been thrown up, while the road to the fords was firmly held by a fresh corps which had been hurried across the river. It was the Confederate army, not the Federal, which was now in a dangerous position, for a gap of two miles intervened between its left wing and its right; and within this gap the enemy, far outnumbering their foe, were firmly entrenched. Moreover, Sedgwick had received peremptory orders to break down all barriers, and move up to Hooker's support. There was, therefore, an imminent prospect that Lee, as Hooker had originally planned, would be caught between the upper and nether millstones. But the Federal commander was not thinking of the offensive,—all his energies seemed to be bent only upon securing a road for retreat. Instead of fiercely assaulting Lee, he ordered the erection of a second line of breastworks in his own rear, and as soon as it was finished, he began to retire from the Hazel Grove plateau, the key to his position,—a movement

which not only left the field open to Stuart to join hands with Lee, but also abandoned to him an elevation from which the Confederate artillery could fire down on the Federal entrenchments toward the east. In a short time, Hooker had concentrated 37,000 men behind the breastworks in the rear of Chancellorsville, and during the rest of the battle, these troops did not fire a musket, although their comrades in the front line were for hours exposed to the fierce attack of the now combined Confederate army, and were finally compelled, after a prolonged resistance, themselves to fall back behind these fortifications.

Lee was about to assault this new position, which lay nearly a mile back of the old, when he was informed that Sedgwick had stormed Marye's Heights, and was rapidly advancing to join Hooker. The order for a forward movement was at once recalled, and a strong detachment under McLaws sent to bar the further progress of this foe. The two met in the vicinity of Salem Church, and so vigorously were the Federals pressed, that they were thrown upon the defensive as their only means of securing the line of retreat to Banks's Ford. Next day, Lee having arrived in person on the ground, Sedgwick found himself in a position of great peril, with Early attacking his rear, and Lee and McLaws his front and flank. Forced to draw back, he took advantage of nightfall, all the darker for a heavy fog, to retreat to the north side of the Rappahannock.

During the two days' fighting, Hooker had not

ventured to leave his entrenchments either to assault Lee or to reinforce Sedgwick. His army of 60,000 men had been held in check by 20,000, while the remainder of the Confederate forces were engaged in the battle with his lieutenant, which was to decide the final issue of the campaign. Having driven Sedgwick across the river, Lee returned to Chancellorsville, but a heavy rain made it impossible for him to advance upon the Federal position that day, and Hooker, as soon as night fell, prudently withdrew beyond the Rappahannock.

Thus ended the battle of Chancellorsville, the greatest of Lee's victories from a purely tactical point of view. As with all his other triumphs, however, the numerical disparity prevented him from converting the Federal retreat into a rout, or striking in the confusion at the enemy's line of communication. From the beginning, Hooker seems to have been dispirited by his opponent's offensive attitude. After his bold and rapid concentration at Chancellorsville, instead of pushing eastward with energy to strike the Confederate rear while Sedgwick assaulted the front, he allowed himself to be checked without difficulty by Jackson's advance. Even at that early stage of the campaign, his first thought appeared to be to keep open his line of retreat, and, therefore, his tactics were directed, not toward conquest, but self-defense. When he saw Jackson's column marching across his front, he exultantly concluded that the enemy were withdrawing; but not even this stimulating delusion

caused him to strike the retiring foe a blow in the rear, delivered not by one corps, as he tried to do, but by the larger part of his army. Lee, who still remained behind, and was in a weakened condition, might at least have been attacked in force. But Hooker's mind was now entirely occupied with the supposed necessity of maintaining his fortified position in order to avoid defeat.

When his right wing had been thrown into confusion by Jackson's sudden onset, and the Federal centre was also in imminent danger of being rolled up, and the road to the fords blocked, Hooker, under cover of darkness, acted with much promptness and energy in restoring the situation ; but next morning, instead of assaulting one or the other of the now separated wings of the Confederate army, he undertook to draw back the greater section of his own forces to a new line of entrenchments in his rear, as if his one object was merely to preserve an open passage. And, afterward, when his entire army was concentrated behind this new line, instead of attacking Stuart, in Lee's absence, at Salem Church, he made not the slightest movement until the latter's return, and then one of retrogression at night across the river simply to avoid his antagonist's last spring. Having a commander who was so easily dispirited to overcome, it seems quite probable that, had Jackson, before being disabled, succeeded in seizing the road to the fords and thus cutting off, or at least impeding the enemy's line of retreat, the Confederate army would have inflicted an appalling reverse on

the Federals, in spite of the fact that the latter were still nearly twice as numerous.

The Confederacy reached the highest point of its fortunes the night when Hooker retreated to the north bank of the Rappahannock ; from that hour, these fortunes were really to decline, although heroic valor and constancy long deferred the end. The only hope of success lay in the employment of the tactics used so conspicuously at Chancellorsville ; but when Jackson fell, Lee was left without a single officer possessing the extraordinary qualifications necessary for carrying out the bold and hazardous manœuvres required to overcome the enemy's enormous superiority in number of men and in material resources. Those great turning movements, whether suggested by Jackson or not, were as consonant with Lee's military genius as with "Stonewall's." There is in the whole history of modern warfare hardly a more melancholy contrast from the Southern point of view than that presented in the comparison of Chancellorsville with Gettysburg, the next great battle : the one, the consummation of genius in conception, and of energy in execution ; the other, even finer and more daring in conception, and yet in execution a failure simply because the celerity, vigor, boldness, and perfect sympathy of Jackson had been replaced by the opinionativeness, obstinacy, procrastination, and practical insubordination of Longstreet.

Lee's moral greatness was never more strikingly displayed than during and after the battle of Chan-

cellorsville. At the moment when the Confederate troops were slowly driving their opponents from in front of the farmhouse at that point, and, in moving by their commander, were saluting him with triumphant hurrahs, a note was handed Lee from Jackson, in which the wounded general congratulated him on the victory. "I shall never forget," says Colonel Marshall, of his staff, "the look of pain and anguish that passed over his face as he listened. With a voice broken with emotion, he bade me say to General Jackson the victory was his, and that the congratulations were due to him." "Had I had my choice," Lee himself wrote, somewhat later, "I would for the good of the country have fallen in your place."

At first, there was ground for hoping that Jackson's wound would not prove fatal; his left arm was amputated and his condition for a time promised a quick recovery. Lee allowed no day to go by without sending his famous lieutenant an affectionate message. "Tell him," he said, "to make haste and get well, and come back to me as soon as he can. He has lost his left arm, and I have lost my right." And when Jackson died, no one mourned his loss more keenly than Lee, the man who was most capable of understanding his genius for war, and who trusted most to that genius for the success of the cause so dear to the hearts of both. Throughout their association, only the most perfect mutual confidence had been displayed; not a cloud arose to obscure their admiration and respect for

each other. "Lee," remarked Jackson on one occasion, "is a phenomenon. He is the only man I could follow blindfold." Never but once did a word approaching criticism of his generous and high-minded commander cross his lips; when Lee's letter attributing to him the brilliant victory at Chancellorsville was read to the wounded soldier, as he lay on his sick bed, he replied gently, "General Lee is very kind, but he should give the glory to God." After the war, Lee repeatedly expressed his conviction that, had he had Jackson with him at Gettysburg, he would have won a decisive victory, and such a victory there, he thought, would have resulted in Southern independence.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN

PERHAPS it was not unnatural that, after the great victory at Chancellorsville, Mr. Davis should have been sanguine that Mr. Lincoln would be compelled by the triumph of the peace party at the North, or by the active intervention of foreign powers, to recognize the independence of the Southern states. In reality, this victory weakened the determination of the Northern war party less than had Fredericksburg, simply because the Federal prospects in the West were at this time far more promising. Vicksburg was now threatened with capture, and should it fall, the Confederacy would be split in two, and its principal field for recruits and provisions lost.

Lee apparently never hoped that the South would succeed by standing permanently on the defensive; and he was as sure of this after the battle of Chancellorsville as he had been before. Nothing but Longstreet's absence, as we have seen, prevented him from crossing the Potomac before that battle was fought; and hardly had the smoke rolled away from the field when he resumed his purpose, all the stronger now that his troops had been encouraged to the highest pitch by a succession of victories. He

felt confident that, could he repeat the triumph of Chancellorsville on Northern soil, the impression which it would make on the Northern people would be far more disheartening than that caused by any disaster in the previous course of the war. He also expected, by a march that would threaten Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia all at once, to force the transfer to the East of a large proportion of the troops then besieging Vicksburg; and finally, by moving into the fertile regions of Pennsylvania, where his army could easily find subsistence, he would relieve the drain upon the over-run fields of Virginia.

Lee's general plan of campaign was to cross the Blue Ridge to the Shenandoah Valley, and having forded the Potomac, to march down the Cumberland Valley perhaps as far north as Harrisburg and then wheel toward the East. By holding the passes of the South Mountain, he would be able to check the enemy's attempts to break his line of communication. His army, now that Longstreet's detachment had again joined him, consisted of some 57,000 foot and 9,000 horse, supported by 250 guns. The infantry had recently been reorganized into three corps, under Longstreet, Ewell, and A. P. Hill respectively; Pendleton was in charge of the artillery arm, and Stuart of the cavalry.

Stuart had shown great capacity as Jackson's successor at Chancellorsville, and in the pending campaign the Confederacy would have been far better served had he been in command of the First Corps,

for, if not the ablest, he was certainly the most energetic of all Lee's remaining lieutenants. Ewell was an officer of experience, but not of great talent; Hill had experience and talent, but was disposed to be rash, a trait that brought on the battle of Gettysburg prematurely; while Longstreet, though a brave and vigorous officer when actually engaged, had qualities that entirely unfitted him to act as Lee's chief subordinate in such a campaign as was now contemplated. He was known even to his own soldiers as "Peter the Slow." In nearly every great movement of the Army of Northern Virginia previous to the invasion of Pennsylvania, this characteristic of his had been exhibited: for instance, in the march to Seven Pines; in the march from the Rappahannock to Gainesville; in the march from the neighborhood of Hagerstown to Boonesboro; and again after Gettysburg, in the march from Gordonsville to the Wilderness, where he was wounded and practically ended his military career, though he was present during the retreat to Appomattox. But a more unfortunate trait still, as bearing upon his usefulness in the approaching campaign, was a tendency to be opinionative to the point of insubordination.

By June 12th, the Confederate army was strung out between Fredericksburg and the Valley. Forty miles intervened between the different corps; Ewell was near Winchester and Longstreet at Culpeper Court-House, while Hill still held his ground at Fredericksburg in order to watch Hooker's movements. Lee was fully aware that, with Ewell in po-

sition to march upon Washington from Harper's Ferry, Mr. Lincoln would never permit the Federal army to undertake a campaign against Richmond; and this anticipation proved correct, for its commander, on June 13th, fell back toward Manassas and Centreville in order to protect the capital. Hill at once broke camp and followed in Longstreet's track, while Stuart, after an engagement at Brandy Station, marched forward east of the Blue Ridge toward the Bull Run Mountains to screen the advance of the Confederate infantry. As soon as the Federals occupied Leesburg, he withdrew to the spurs of the Blue Ridge. By this time, Ewell had entered the Cumberland Valley, but it was not until Lee saw that Hooker would be content with simply keeping between him and Washington, without assuming the offensive, that he finally decided to lead the rest of his army over the Potomac and to move slowly northward.

Lee had urged Mr. Davis to form a second army, under Beauregard, for the purpose of threatening Washington, as he knew that this would cause Mr. Lincoln to diminish Hooker's force, and thus increase the chance of Confederate victory on the soil of Pennsylvania. But Mr. Davis declined to follow these counsels, on the ground that, should Richmond's defenses be weakened by the home-guard's reduction, it would be liable to invasion from Fortress Monroe,—an error of judgment that was to have important consequences.

An error of judgment not less serious was com-

mitted by Stuart, who had been empowered to cross the Potomac either at Shepherdstown on the west side of the Blue Ridge, or at some point on the east side, but in the rear of the Federal army. He was, however, expected to keep his force between that army and Lee's, so as to serve as a screen. No doubt, Lee would have given Stuart more specific instructions had not that great cavalry leader acted with such prudence and sagacity in the use of his horsemen just before the battle of Chancellorsville began ; but unfortunately for the Confederate cause, he was now to prove himself the Stuart of the Chickahominy rather than the Stuart of the Rappahannock. Instead of placing himself between Lee and Hooker, and serving as the eyes of the Confederate army, he allowed the spirit of mere adventure to carry him within three miles of Washington, and then had to ride as far north as Carlisle in order to pass the barrier of the Federal army, now interposed between him and Lee. He arrived on the field of Gettysburg too late to change the course of events ; and it was due to his absence up to the night of the second day's battle that the original plan of campaign was entirely disarranged.

Lee reached Chambersburg on June 27th, and here he issued a proclamation sternly prohibiting the destruction or appropriation without compensation, of private property on any pretext whatever. "It must be remembered," he said, "that we make war only on armed men." That this order was fully obeyed by the troops is proven by the testimony of

foreign officers who accompanied the Confederate army. "I saw no straggling into the houses," records Colonel Freemantle, of England, "nor were any of the inhabitants disturbed or annoyed by the soldiers." This action was the more remarkable in the light of the feeling of acute resentment which prevailed among the Southern people at this time: one influential section urged that the North should now suffer retaliation for the terrible losses and privations caused by the invasion of Southern soil; while another declared that the devastation of Pennsylvania would be as fully justified by the necessities of war, supposed or real, as the confiscation of their slaves by the Emancipation Proclamation. But General Lee took a different view: he intended, he said, to conduct the war in harmony with Christian principles, and no wrongs committed by individual enemies would excuse any departure from those principles; he, therefore, deliberately set his face against the indulgence of a spirit of revenge now that he had the power to ravage one of the most fertile parts of the North.

As soon as Hooker heard that Lee's entire army had passed the Potomac, he crossed that stream himself, and advanced in a northeasterly direction. His object was not simply to keep his army between Lee and the Federal capital; he was also watching for an opportunity to strike at the Confederate line of communication, a matter of vital importance to his opponents at that great distance from their base. As he marched, he spread out the bulk of his

troops in the shape of a fan, with the outer circle facing westward, while he dispatched Slocum to discover a vulnerable point in the Confederate rear. These plans, however, were reversed as soon as Meade was nominated to the chief command : Slocum was called back to the main army, which halted at a point where it could easily bar the road to Philadelphia, should Lee continue to move northward ; or to Baltimore, should he wheel sharply to the east.

Lee, apprehensive lest a further advance toward Harrisburg should endanger his communications, ordered his three corps, now widely separated, to concentrate at Cashtown, situated on the east side of the South Mountain range not far from Gettysburg. Ewell at this time was in the vicinity of Carlisle. Cashtown was chosen because, in case of a repulse, the wagon trains could be safely transferred through the gap at that point to the Cumberland Valley, and the passage closed against the enemy.

Meade also had selected his ground for the approaching battle ; this lay on the line of Pipe Creek, twelve miles southeast of Gettysburg, a position of great natural strength. Had Stuart been present with Lee at this critical hour, the Confederates would certainly have been able to choose the time, but not so certainly the place of conflict, for it was not likely that Meade would have abandoned Pipe Creek and advanced against his opponent, awaiting him at Cashtown. The wisest policy, as

he knew, was to remain where he was, since time was a factor of no importance to him stationed in his own country, in easy reach of supplies, and occupying an entrenched position between the enemy and Washington. Moreover, he justly anticipated that Lee's energetic character would prompt him ultimately to seek his antagonist and fight rather than withdraw to Virginia without a battle.

Cashtown and Pipe Creek were separated by a distance of twenty miles. It was merely by accident that the two armies came into collision at a point nearly equi-distant from each of these two previously selected positions. On June 30th, Pettigrew's brigade, leaving Cashtown, marched toward Gettysburg in the hope of obtaining there a much needed supply of shoes; but, unknown to them, that town was already in the possession of a detachment of Federal cavalry. Pettigrew, after a sharp brush with the enemy, fell back and rejoined A. P. Hill, who, somewhat rashly, determined next day to reconnoitre, without anticipating, as he should have done, that such a movement might lead to the violation of General Lee's orders not to bring on a battle until all the Confederate army was up. The concentration in the neighborhood of Cashtown was still incomplete. Heth, who was sent forward, struck, not far from Gettysburg, a division of the First Corps, which had been moved up from the Federal main army as soon as Meade was informed of the presence of Confederate troops in the vicinity

of that town. Pender soon joining Heth, the combination gave their side the preponderance. Reynolds, the Federal commander, was killed. By one o'clock in the afternoon, two divisions of the Federal Eleventh Corps had arrived on the field, while its third was left to hold Cemetery Ridge, a strong position situated immediately south of Gettysburg. A sharp combat was in progress when Ewell, who, with two divisions, had soon come up to reinforce Pender and Heth, attacked the left flank of the Eleventh Corps and drove it back, a stroke that exposed the First Corps' right wing, which, in consequence, finding itself in imminent danger of being cut off from its line of retreat to Cemetery Ridge, retired upon that point in a state of great confusion.

During the course of these events, Hancock, who had been sent forward to report on the advisability of concentrating the entire Federal army at Gettysburg, reached Cemetery Heights, and one of his first acts was to take possession of Culp's Hill, southwest of the town, a position commanding Cemetery Heights from that side. Had Ewell pressed on with energy, he could easily have seized the latter before night fell, for, at that time, the Federal force holding it did not exceed 6,000 men. Lee, who had come up in the afternoon, observing through his field glass the enemy retreating in confusion over the hills behind the town, sent Ewell a verbal order to advance and capture the Ridge, if "he deemed it practicable," but to avoid bringing on a general battle, as Longstreet's corps was still many miles

away. In his cavalry's absence, Lee had been unable to ascertain whether the Federal troops engaged in the fight just ended were isolated detachments, or detachments in touch with the main Federal army.

Left to his own decision, and alarmed by the reported approach of a large Federal force, a piece of news turning out to be false, Ewell decided to await the arrival of one of his divisions which had not yet come up; but when this division at last appeared, it was six o'clock, and the Twelfth Federal Corps, supported by a part of the Third, had arrived on Cemetery Heights and taken position near their comrades. Had Hill, whose corps had suffered most severely in the day's battle, been willing to attack at once in coöperation with Ewell, the Heights might still have been captured before nightfall; but he preferred to remain inactive until Anderson's division should join him, and when this occurred, it was too dark to advance in force.

If Hill and Ewell had moved forward and seized the Ridge, no further fighting would have taken place at Gettysburg; Meade would have simply drawn his entire army back to Pipe Creek. The *morale* of his troops, however, would have been sensibly lowered by their ill success. The Confederates' failure to pursue led Hancock, who saw the defensive possibilities of Cemetery Ridge, to urge the Federal army's immediate concentration on those heights, advice justified by the issue, but not in itself wise, as the Federal commander would have discovered, had the

Confederate army taken advantage of the unexampled opportunity which the movement presented to strike their opponents in detail. Meade arrived on the ground late at night, and, though he adopted his lieutenant's advice, did not do so with confidence.

By twelve o'clock the same night (July 1st), the three Confederate corps were encamped either at Gettysburg, or within four miles of the town, in a position where, if they should act with promptness and energy, they could throw themselves upon the enemy by the first sign of dawn, before which hour it would not be possible for all the Federal corps to reach the Ridge ;—in fact, they would be strung out all the way from Pipe Creek and beyond to Gettysburg. When the first streak of light appeared in the sky on the morning of July 2d, there were posted on Cemetery Ridge the remnants of the defeated First and Eleventh Corps, a part of the Third, and the whole of the fresh Twelfth Corps. Four miles away was the Second, which did not arrive until seven o'clock ; nine miles away was the Fifth ; and twenty-five miles away was the Sixth, the largest and finest of all. Had the Confederate army attacked at any time before seven o'clock, which was entirely feasible, it would have found itself confronted by not more than one-half its number. These, expelled from their entrenchments, would have been pressed back upon the advancing Second Corps, who, in all probability, would have been thrown into confusion by their retreating comrades, and the whole body

driven back upon the forward columns of the Fifth and Sixth Corps.

Could Lee have dictated the position of his opponents, he could hardly have done so to greater advantage to himself. The absence of his cavalry, instead of proving a perilous drawback, had led to a combination of circumstances far more favorable to his wishes than anything which could have occurred had that cavalry been present. Who was responsible for the loss of the greatest opportunity ever presented to the Confederate army to defeat the enemy in detail?

After sunset on July 1st, Lee held a conference with Ewell and his two division commanders, Early and Rodes. As their troops were on the ground, while Longstreet had bivouacked four miles away, Lee was anxious that they should begin the attack next morning with an assault on the Federal right extending as far as Culp's Hill; but they urged that the weak point in the Federal line lay on the left, and that against this, the first movement should be directed. Lee received the suggestion with evidences of disapproval, not because he thought it unsound from a military point of view, but because the officer who would have to carry it out was then four miles distant from the scene of proposed action, and was notoriously the most dilatory of all his lieutenants. "Longstreet is a very good fighter when he gets into position," he remarked thoughtfully in weighing the suggestion, "but he is so slow." Finally, however, in an evil mo-

ment for the Confederacy, Lee adopted it. When the conference broke up, it was clearly understood that Longstreet was to attack the Federal left at the earliest moment practicable next morning, and the sound of his cannon was to be the signal for Ewell to hurl his corps against the Federal right, and for Hill, to move against the Federal centre.

General Pendleton, chief of the artillery, a clergyman whose integrity was never seriously questioned by any one, states that Lee told him that night that in an interview with Longstreet a few hours earlier, he had ordered an advance against the Federal left at sunrise,—an entirely practicable movement, as Longstreet's corps was then encamped only four miles from Gettysburg. Longstreet denied that he received such instructions, but whether he received them or not (they were precisely those, it may be asserted parenthetically, which a commander even of ordinary alertness would have given), no one was more clearly aware than himself that by celerity alone the opportunity presented to the Confederates to overwhelm the foe in detail could be seized and used. "Time on this occasion," as he himself admitted, "was more than cannon balls." Unfortunately for the Southern cause, no specific orders in writing were drawn up for his direction, for it was General Lee's habit to give verbal orders, and allow his officers to be guided largely by circumstances in carrying them out. This was well with such a soldier as Jackson; it was not well with such a soldier as Long-

street, brave and vigorous though he always was in action. Students of Jackson's career can easily imagine what that incarnation of energy would have done had he been in Longstreet's place on the night of July 1st. No orders to march at daybreak would have been needed by him; by dawn, his corps would have been confronting Cemetery Hill ready to advance up its slopes at the first sound of the bugle.

So plain was the course to be pursued on the morning of July 2d, that not even Longstreet, slow as he was, would have failed to carry it out had not another unfortunate characteristic come into play. As has already been stated, he was extremely opinionative, and he took it into his head (apparently in a desire to bear to Lee the peculiar executive relation in flank movements which Jackson had borne) that Cemetery Hill should not be assaulted from in front, but the whole position of the enemy turned. Nor would he yield when Lee offered strong reasons to show the inadvisability of such a manœuvre. The first of these reasons was that, in the cavalry's absence, it would be a very perilous step to penetrate farther into a region occupied in force by the Federals. A flank march, to be successful even under the most favorable circumstances, must be made with great rapidity and with more or less secrecy. How could the infantry advance swiftly without horsemen when they themselves would have to reconnoitre on all sides at once, and when the head of the column might be crushed at any moment by an unexpected assault of the

enemy? Secondly, even if Lee should be able to thrust himself between Meade and Washington or Baltimore, the Federal army's line of communication would not really be cut, for one part of the North would still be open behind it; Meade could still stand quietly on the defensive, or what would be worse, strike at Lee's base of supply, already jeopardized by the forward movement.

Nor could Lee take a position on Seminary Ridge, opposite Cemetery Heights and await an assault, since he was absolutely dependent on the country behind him for food, and that country had already been depleted by the passage of his army. It would not at best furnish a support for more than four or five days, should he remain stationary; nor could he afford to disperse his troops far afield in order to collect provisions. Moreover, the longer the two armies stood face to face, the more reinforcements Meade was certain to receive, until, finally, the preponderance in his favor would be so enormous that, like Grant later at Petersburg, he could, with ease, sweep around his antagonist's flank at the very hour he assailed that antagonist's front.

The character of the entire situation justified Lee in ordering Longstreet to march against Cemetery Ridge at the earliest practicable moment on the morning of July 2d. But that officer, instead of entering heartily into his commander's plan as soon as his own was overruled for sound reasons, acted as if his principal object was to prove what an excellent prophet he was. Had he gone deliberately

to work to thwart Lee's purposes, he could not have done so more successfully. Had not his conduct on the second and third days at Gettysburg been of a piece with his conduct at Seven Pines and Fair Oaks, he might justly be suspected of disaffection to the Southern cause. It is no exaggeration to say that the fate of the Confederacy turned absolutely on what he should do between the hours of 4:30 and 7 A. M. on July 2d. Promptness in concentrating in front of Cemetery Hill during those fateful one hundred and fifty minutes, would have enabled Lee to defeat the enemy in detail. A triumph at Gettysburg might not, after all, owing to the capture of Vicksburg, have led to Southern independence; but, in looking back on the war, there seems just reason to think that the only hope of that independence lay in a great victory won on this field. Had Longstreet advanced to battle at 4:30, the hour of dawn at this season, he would have found immediately in his front Geary's division alone; had he advanced at five o'clock, he would have found the Federal position on the left of the First Corps entirely undefended. By seven o'clock, the Second Corps had reached the Ridge, but even with this reinforcement the Federal entrenchments were still assailable. Round Top and Little Round Top, in command of the Federal line in reverse, could still have been seized without difficulty—being then unoccupied—and permanently held, a fact which would ultimately have forced Meade to retire to Pipe Creek.

It was not until 8 A. M., nearly three hours after the sun had risen, that the main body of Longstreet's corps arrived at Gettysburg, although they had only four miles to traverse. Lee, who had been on horseback since daybreak, and chafing under the delay, had been forced to look on helplessly as reinforcements poured into the Federal entrenchments. By that hour, two additional corps had joined the four already on the ground, and 65,000 men looked down upon the Confederate army. These new bodies of troops had come up from a greater distance than Longstreet's. Instead of marching forward at once, this officer further inflamed his chief's impatience by renewing his arguments in favor of a flank movement, although they had been fully canvassed and rejected the night before. "The enemy is here," exclaimed Lee; "if we don't whip him, he will whip us." In a sinister moment for his cause, he permitted himself so far to be influenced by his lieutenant's reluctance as to send Colonel Venable, of his staff, to find out whether Ewell, now that he had been able to examine by daylight the enemy's line in front of him, still thought it inadvisable to begin the battle by an assault on the Federal right. Ewell reported that the position was now too strong to be assailed with any prospect of success, and this conclusion was confirmed by Lee himself, who rode over and inspected it in person.

Returning to Longstreet, he, at eleven o'clock, gave that officer a positive order to advance. It

was then, perhaps, too late to dislodge the combined corps posted on Cemetery Ridge before the remaining ones could come up; but the two Round Tops could still have been captured, and Meade's position thus rendered in the end untenable. Law's brigade not yet having joined Longstreet, the latter assumed the responsibility of disobeying the command for an immediate attack until that brigade should appear, although he must have known that additional time thus offered the enemy to hurry up the absent corps, was certain only to increase the disproportion between the Confederates and the Federals, even after Law's arrival. For every one hundred men Longstreet could obtain by waiting, the Federals would obtain two hundred, or even more, and the last numerical disparity of the opposing forces would necessarily be greater than the first.

Although on the night of July 1st, Longstreet was encamped only four miles from the battle-field; although, by eight o'clock, he had got the whole of his corps, with the exception of one brigade, in front of Cemetery Ridge, it was not until one in the afternoon that he put his troops in motion; and it was not until four that he was in a position to make the attack which should have been made at least eleven hours earlier. At that moment, a Federal corps, which, when its march began, was thirty-four miles from Gettysburg, had reached the field, and the whole Federal army was now ready to repel assault. It was no longer in Lee's power

to defeat the enemy in detail. Even if he could carry Cemetery Ridge by storm, his troops would be too fatigued and broken to undertake a rapid march upon Washington and Baltimore. By his slowness and practical disloyalty to his chief, Longstreet had created a condition, which, had it existed in the morning, would have caused Lee to adopt a flank movement in spite of the perils that would have accompanied it. If Longstreet had had such an object secretly in view, it was now too late to realize it, for the two armies were in actual touch, and it was less dangerous to attack than to retreat.

The Federal position was very strong naturally, and had been made still stronger by art. It was shaped like a rude fish hook. The head of the prong, bent southeast, consisted of Culp's Hill ; the shaft, of the Ridge itself ; and the barb, of two small mountains known as Round Top and Little Round Top. The capture of Culp's Hill would have weakened the Federal hold on Cemetery Heights, because it would have exposed the Federal rear ; while the capture of the Round Tops would have enabled the Confederates to bombard the Heights in reverse, which, besides doing deadly execution in itself, would have given powerful support to a frontal attack. On its western side, Cemetery Ridge fell gradually to an undulating valley, and then the ground as gradually again rose, until it formed Seminary Ridge about a mile distant, where the main body of the Confederate army was posted. Ewell's corps, on the extreme left, faced Culp's Hill,

or the top of the fish hook ; Hill's corps, in the centre, the main Ridge or the middle of the shaft ; and Longstreet, on the extreme right, the Round Tops, or the two barbs.

When the battle began, the Federals were not occupying Round Top, although a corps was stationed in its rear. Little Round Top, likewise unoccupied, was somewhat better protected by an angle in the Federal position, which made that part, as was soon shown, highly vulnerable to attack. This angle, which was really a mile in front of the Federal army's main line, was held by Sickles' corps, and the ground he stood upon was known as the Peach Orchard. Lee was not aware when Longstreet assailed this advanced body of troops, a movement which opened the battle, that the Fifth Corps, entrenched behind them, really formed that section of the enemy's main line. The convex shape of the Federal position gave Meade the advantage of operating on interior lines about two and a half miles long, a fact that enabled him to hurry forward reinforcements to any threatened point in much less time than could the Confederates, who operated on exterior lines, five miles in extent. The latter, indeed, could move only along a circumference, as the roads in their front were exposed to the Federal artillery fire. The length of their lines, held as they were by only 60,000 men, made the establishment of a reserve impracticable, and it also rendered a concerted movement from one end to the other almost impossible. It was not a position which Lee would

have taken had his cavalry been present before the fighting began.

Longstreet was ordered to open the battle by attacking the corps posted in the Peach Orchard, and having turned its flank, to roll it back along the Emmittsburg Road, skirting the orchard, until the whole was pressed in confusion on the Federal centre. While this movement was in progress, Ewell was to assail the Federal right, and, if possible, roll this wing back on that point also.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, these two projected assaults began simultaneously. Ewell's was only partially successful; Johnson's division was able to seize and hold one of the Federal lines of entrenchment on Culp's Hill, but the other two divisions accomplished nothing. In the meanwhile, Longstreet had deployed in front of the Peach Orchard. The brigade on his extreme right was posted not far from Round Top. It was reported to its general by a small force sent forward to reconnoitre, that this height as well as Little Round Top was unoccupied. The general promptly in person informed his division commander of this fact, and earnestly demonstrated the ease with which the Federal left might be turned from that point. An aide-de-camp was dispatched to Longstreet, but although General Lee could have been quickly communicated with, that officer merely returned the reply that he had been ordered to advance against the enemy down the Emmittsburg Road (which was in the opposite direction) and that these instructions must be

obeyed. Thus the opportunity of seizing the two Tops was lost by the action of a subordinate who, in the morning, had not hesitated to assume the responsibility of violating Lee's command to move into battle at once; and who now, when a similar use of his discretion would have been of extraordinary advantage to the Southern cause, preferred to play the part of an unthinking machine in carrying out orders which Lee would have been the first to modify, had he been informed at once of the divisional commander's report.

The sharp fight at a later hour for the same general position, when, by Warren's promptness in assuming to act on his own judgment, Little Round Top had been occupied by the Federals, would seem to show that Longstreet fully understood the vital relation it bore to Confederate success. With the two Round Tops in his possession, the whole of the Federal left wing, as soon as Sickles was defeated, could have been pressed back on the centre.

While Longstreet was assailing Sickles' left, Hill was assailing his right. Humphreys' division, in changing front, was forced back to the Ridge, and the battle was restored for the Federals at that point only by the forward rush of reinforcements. Wright's brigade, after piercing the Federal centre, succeeded in penetrating as far as the Ridge, but were compelled to relinquish their hold by a vigorous charge of the foe. Wilcox's brigade actually reached the crest, but, like their comrades, were finally driven back. Had these two brigades been

firmly supported by Pender's and Anderson's, also of Hill's Corps, it is not improbable that the Federal centre would have been permanently split in two. Hill's management of the operations in his section of the field was marked by neither promptness nor energy, and the ground gained there was soon lost by his feeble action. Both on the Confederate left and centre, the excellent opportunity existing or created for the enemy's defeat in their front was permitted by Hill's weakness and Longstreet's perversity to pass unused.

The general result of the second day's operations over the whole field, however, was not unfavorable to the Confederate cause. Taking it in connection with the first day's victory, Lee was justified in thinking that the courage of the Federal army was so shaken that a vigorous, concerted attack on its lines the following morning stood such a chance of success as to warrant its being made; and he was the more convinced of this because the positions gained on the right along the Emmittsburg Road would enable his artillery to render the assaulting columns more assistance than they had previously. Ewell, as we have seen, had captured a portion of Culp's Hill on the extreme left, which would be of great advantage in continuing the attack in that section of the field. Early, on that side, and Wright and Wilcox in the centre, would have been able to hold the positions on the Ridge which they had reached, had they been promptly supported in force. Stuart's cavalry had arrived, and Pickett's

division, consisting of 5,000 fresh troops, had also come up.

What point in the Federal line should be first assailed on the following morning? Such was the question presented to Lee on the night of the 2d, Not the extreme Federal left, for that was peculiarly strong, owing to the possession of Little Round Top. Moreover, success in that quarter would not seriously interfere with Meade's road for retreat in case he was expelled from the Ridge. Lee soon saw that the Federal centre was the real point to be attacked. His plan was to drive one half of his army like a wedge through this section of the Federal position; then, with a part of the same forces wheel sharply to the left, and, if possible, annihilate the Federal right wing, thus closing the line of Federal withdrawal toward Baltimore; and when this had been accomplished, turn to assist the other part of the wedge, which had been ordered to hold the Federal left wing at bay.

The entire movement would be both bold and hazardous, but had it been carried out with the vigor and concert shown at Gaines' Mill and Chancellorsville, its triumphant consummation was far from impossible. At this moment, Lee recognized as clearly as he had always done that the only hope of Southern independence lay in the delivery of an overwhelming stroke, and that in delivering such a stroke, great risks must be taken. Even a second Chancellorsville might, by following so soon upon two other defeats, tend to weaken the North's determination

to continue the war. Lee knew that he was now too close to his opponent to make a successful flank march with the view of cutting his communications; nor could he retreat without such a confession of failure as would destroy the whole moral effect of the invasion.

To Pickett's and Pettigrew's (Heth's) divisions was assigned the duty of forming the sharp end of the wedge to be driven through the Federal centre. These troops were to be backed up by Anderson's division, while Hill was to hold other reinforcements in readiness to march to their assistance at once. Hood and McLaws, of Longstreet's corps, were directed to make a demonstration against the extreme left, and at the right moment join in the attack on the centre. As the assaulting column advanced, its front was to be protected by the overhead fire of Hill's and Longstreet's batteries, and also of a part of Ewell's, while its flanks were to be supported by artillery pushed forward as the troops pressed on. This artillery was to be propelled into the expected breach and to aid in widening it. During the progress of these operations on the right and in the centre, Ewell, on the extreme left, was to be assaulting the Federal line immediately in his front.

Unfortunately for the Confederacy, Lee, on the third day as on the second, was forced to rely principally upon Longstreet for the achievement of his main purpose. On the second day, as we have seen, that officer had disconcerted his chief's plans by

his slowness in reaching the battle-field ; by his paralyzing opposition to that chief's wishes ; by his disregard of the command to move at eleven o'clock ; and, finally, by his machine-like loyalty to an order which Lee would have extolled him for modifying on his own responsibility. On the third day, Longstreet was to exhibit an even more insubordinate spirit ; and by his obstinacy and perversity, to deprive the South of what was to be its last but greatest chance of winning its independence.

At daybreak, on July 3d, the third day of the battle, the Federals anticipated a portion of Lee's plan by assaulting his left wing. As Ewell's partial hold on Culp's Hill threatened their line of retreat in case of repulse, and also exposed their reserve artillery to capture, it was of vital importance that the position occupied by the Confederates should be retaken ; and this, after a sharp contest, the Federals were able to do. This success, by securing Meade's line of withdrawal, reduced the chances of an overwhelming disaster, should Lee drive his antagonist from his entrenchments on Cemetery Ridge.

At 9 A. M., three hours before the struggle on the Confederate left ceased, the column which was to make the assault on the Federal centre was lying behind Seminary Ridge ready to move forward at the first signal. It was necessary that the advance should begin while the enemy opposite the Confederate left were engaged with Ewell ; but it was not until after one o'clock in the afternoon, when the

fighting in that part of the field had ended, leaving the Federals there free to strengthen their centre, that Pickett and Pettigrew received the signal to charge. The heavy cannonade preceding the movement had served only to exhaust the Confederates' ammunition without really demoralizing the enemy. Instead of advancing under the supporting fire of their own batteries on Seminary Ridge, the assaulting column swept on, with the guns on the heights in their rear silent.

The distance to be traversed spread over about fourteen hundred yards. First, the column descended a slope of Seminary Ridge, and having crossed the narrow undulating valley at its foot, began to ascend the gentle slope of Cemetery Heights. About half way, the Federal artillery in front started to play with fatal effect on the breasts of the approaching ranks, while the batteries on Little Round Top poured an equally deadly fire into their flanks. Owing to the waste of powder in the cannonade, only some fifteen or eighteen guns could be sent forward with the column to protect it on each side, and thus these brave men were practically unsupported by artillery.

Notwithstanding this fact, Pickett's division carried the enemy's first line, and a small company, led by General Armistead, rushing forward, seized several cannon planted between it and the second line; but, with the fall of that gallant officer, they were soon driven back behind the shelter of the stone wall which had served as a breastwork for the

first. This was the moment when, according to General Lee's plan, not less than 20,000 additional men were to advance from the Confederate side. With these reinforcements pressing on toward the breach, or keeping the wings of the Federal army from converging upon it; and with the entire artillery arm at play, either in widening the breach itself, or in diverting assistance from the Federals at that point, there was no reason why the wedge should not have penetrated far enough to split the Federal centre, and throw it to right and left in confusion. But neither troops nor guns came to the column's support. Pettigrew was soon foiled; and Pickett, who had lost 3,395 men killed, wounded or captured in a total of 4,500, had no alternative but to fall back to the Confederate main line.

Why had Pickett and Pettigrew been left to fight an entire army without assistance? Although Longstreet had been empowered to send forward the whole of Anderson's division, only two brigades participated in the battle; and with equal supineness, he had used but two of Pender's division of Hill's corps. Hood's and McLaws's divisions, instead of first demonstrating against the Federal left, and then vigorously assaulting it or the centre at the critical moment, had been entirely occupied in protecting their wagon train from a dash of a few brigades of Federal cavalry. In the presence of 60,000 men looking quietly on, as if at some grand military review, Longstreet had sent 15,000 men to death or capture, without really attempting

to give them the strong and prompt support called for by General Lee's express orders, and by the dictates of common sense.

As soon as the remnants of the assaulting column straggled back, Lee exerted himself in person to reform his lines at that point, and in a very short time, the Confederate right and centre were prepared to resist with vigor a counterstroke, had one been made. Meade, however, was satisfied merely to throw his cavalry on his opponent's flank in order to cut down the infantry, should they show signs of confusion; but the horsemen were so firmly received that they were forced to withdraw.

It was not until the second night after the final struggle that Lee set his trains in motion. Meade was so convinced that this was the first step toward a flank march for the purpose of drawing him away from Cemetery Heights, that he instructed his subordinates not to bring on another battle. Not until the morning of the 5th did the retreat of the rear-guard begin. The withdrawal of the army was due to no loss of *morale;* had it remained on Seminary Ridge, it would have been entirely lacking in ordinary supplies, while its communications with Harper's Ferry, upon which it depended for ammunition, would have been in danger of severance. It was not until the 6th that Meade, abandoning his entrenchments, followed in Lee's track; but the pursuit was so feeble that there was little effort to attack even the rear-guard. A rise in the waters of the Potomac forced Lee, before crossing, to take up

a position in order to repel an assault, should one be made; but without serious molestation, he, on the 13th, withdrew into Virginia.

Thus ended the Gettysburg campaign. The losses during the three days' battle amounted in various ways to 21,451 men on the Confederate side, and to 23,003 on the Federal. Four Federal general officers and five Confederate were killed, and thirteen Federal and nine Confederate wounded. Excepting the third day's struggle, when only about one-fifth of the Confederate army was engaged, the result as a whole had not been unfavorable to the Southern cause; that army had at least inflicted as much damage as it had received, and had then safely retreated at its leisure. In its larger aspects, however, the battle of Gettysburg was a heavy blow to Southern hopes, as, for the second time, the invasion of the North had terminated in failure. The Army of Northern Virginia, justly regarded as the Confederacy's chief instrument for winning its independence, had, for a time at least, been completely balked in its attempt to win that independence by a single stroke when all the circumstances appeared highly auspicious. The fall of Vicksburg, by isolating so vast a section of Confederate territory, undoubtedly gave to the issue of this great battle, a gloomier significance than it deserved. From the Southern point of view, its most depressing feature after all was, not that it compelled Lee to retreat across the Potomac for the second time, but that it revealed his entire lack of a lieutenant upon whom he could rely, as he had

relied upon Jackson, for the prompt and skilful execution of his plans. All the apprehensions raised by that general's death were confirmed by this campaign, although the disconcerting part played by Longstreet was not fully known at the time. Careful observers had now only too much reason to expect that subsequent campaigns would illustrate the same deficiency to an even more conspicuous degree.

General Lee's moral greatness was exhibited as strikingly at Gettysburg as at Chancellorsville. At Chancellorsville, as we have seen, he attributed to Jackson all the credit of the victory; at Gettysburg, he assumed all the discredit of the defeat. "It is all my fault," he exclaimed to Pickett when that gallant officer returned to the lines on Seminary Ridge, outraged to tears by the failure to support his division. "It is all my fault, and you must help me out of it the best you can."

From the larger point of view, General Lee was right in attributing the defeat to himself, for it was principally due to his habit of showing an almost excessive consideration for the feelings, wishes, and opinions of his corps commanders that at least one of them ventured upon liberties of action, which he would not have indulged in had his chief insisted more sternly on his own supremacy. Several observers who stood close to Lee during the war testify that, out of sheer kindness of heart and amiability of temper, he was too gentle in dealing with incompetent or perverse subordi-

nates. Had Jackson, a man always intolerant of inefficiency, and permitting no departure from his instructions, or even a show of opposition, been Longstreet's commander at Gettysburg, no time would have been wasted by him in arguing with his opinionative and procrastinating lieutenant on the morning of July 2d. There would have been but one order—"March,"—which would have been received and carried out without question. Only one council of war was ever summoned by Jackson, and it would have been better for the Confederacy had Lee also acted so exclusively on his own judgment that his most self-complacent officers would have recognized the hopelessness of trying to alter his resolution. Leaving his balking lieutenant and riding off to find out whether Ewell could not, after all, make the first attack (Federal reinforcements, in the meanwhile, streaming into the entrenchments on Cemetery Hill), Lee presents a spectacle well calculated to lower his reputation as a determined and energetic leader of men. Longstreet was clearly entitled to his own opinion, but that he should have permitted this opinion, after it had been overruled, to govern his conduct throughout the battle was an act of disloyalty which even he, with all his self-esteem, would not have committed had he been serving under a chief of more unbending temper.

Aware that Longstreet did not enter heartily into his plans, why did Lee rely upon him for the performance of so vital a task? As we have seen, on

the night of July 1st, Lee was anxious for Ewell to begin the attack next morning, simply because Longstreet, whose corps was then four miles away, "was so slow." He consented to be overruled only when he was convinced that the first assault should be directed against Cemetery Ridge from the right and not from the left. Longstreet arrived on the battle-field last, and it was due to this characteristic fact that he had to be posted in the position from which the first advance against the enemy was to be made. Moreover, when he had once entered a fight, no one struck with greater determination and pertinacity, and he showed this admirable quality at the Peach Orchard on the second day of the battle. Hill, on the other hand, exhibited there decided feebleness. On the third day, Lee was again compelled by the mere force of circumstances to rely upon Longstreet. The practical insubordination as well as the slowness marking his conduct before the battle of the second day began, was, doubtless, not forgotten by Lee; but the vigorous assault on Sickles had naturally modified the unfavorable impressions caused by those acts. Ewell was stationed at the other end of the field, and Hill, who was nearer at hand, was known to be inferior to Longstreet in skill and experience in handling large bodies of troops. Neither, therefore, could be considered for the task of the third day.

Had Longstreet been a Federal officer, and had he supported that side at Gettysburg as he supported the Confederate, he would have been tried

for disobedience and incompetence, and dropped from the roll. Such was the fate which overtook Burnside, Porter and Franklin for offenses far less serious; such was the fate which also overtook Warren until he was reinstated by Grant. But Lee, if he ever really thought of court-martialing his refractory lieutenant, of which there is no proof, shrank from doing so, because he was assured of Longstreet's loyalty to the South, appreciated his valuable services in the past, and recognized that his degradation would arouse resentment in his corps, and perhaps, in some measure, alienate the support of Georgia, the state justly claiming him as one of its most distinguished citizens. Nothing was to be gained by sowing dissension, now that it was so urgent that all should act as one for the advancement of a cause whose prospects had suddenly darkened.

If distrustful of Longstreet, why did not Lee assume personal charge of the operations assigned to that officer? And why did he show so much less tactical ability at Gettysburg than he had at Sharpsburg? As we have seen, the position at Sharpsburg was taken after a careful examination of the ground with a special view to its tactical advantages. At Gettysburg, on the other hand, he had no choice; the battle began by accident, and he was forced to arrange his troops in the field as he found it, a condition which compelled him to shape his lines in a manner that greatly hampered concert of action, even if it did not render such

concert impracticable. When once a commander has given his general orders in battle, he has to rely on his lieutenants' intelligence and energy to execute them. He cannot personally execute his own orders. Should a subordinate show a lack of judgment, skill and spirit, then it is rarely in his commander's power to remedy the deficiency. And if that subordinate also undertakes to question the wisdom of his superior's general directions, and, in consequence, to act with a supineness and half-heartedness tantamount to insubordination, as Longstreet did at both Fair Oaks and Gettysburg, not to mention the first day at Second Manassas, it is not often that the situation can be saved by the commander's personal intervention, simply because the opportunity for striking a successful blow during the actual operations on the battle-field is so soon lost. Not even Napoleon himself could always hold his lieutenants in hand, as Waterloo revealed; nor could McClellan at Sharpsburg, nor Lee at Gettysburg, in some respects the two most momentous battles ever fought on our western continent.

It is a fact of singular interest that, after Gettysburg, both Lee and Meade were influenced by the course of events to offer their resignations as the commanders of their respective armies: Meade because Mr. Lincoln was dissatisfied at the safe retreat of the Confederate forces; Lee because the tone of the Southern press seemed to intimate that the failure of the campaign had shaken the public confidence in his military capacity. In a very

touching letter to Mr. Davis, he expressed his willingness to transfer the command to some "younger and abler man." "I know," he added, "he will have as gallant and brave an army as ever existed to second his efforts, and it will be the happiness of my life to see at its head a worthy leader, one who can perform more than I can hope to perform, and all that I have wished." He complained of no one but himself. "My eyesight is not perfect," he said, "and I am so dull that, in attempting to use the eyes of others, I find myself often misled." Mr. Davis replied that "to request him to find some one more fit for command, or who possessed more of the confidence of the army or of the reflecting men of the country, was to demand an impossibility." And such was the universal opinion of the Southern people.

CHAPTER IX

WILDERNESS TO COLD HARBOR

Lee, after crossing the Potomac, drew back slowly to the Rapidan, where his army reposed during the next three months. Meade, in the meanwhile, was stationed near Culpeper Court-House. At the end of this interval, there began between the two a campaign of manœuvres, ranging over the entire region between the Rapidan and Bull Run. Lee, on one occasion, followed his opponent as far as Chantilly, almost in sight of the spires of Washington. "I could have thrown him further back," he wrote, "but saw no chance of bringing him to battle, and it would have only served to fatigue our troops by advancing further. I should certainly have endeavored to throw him north of the Potomac, but thousands of my troops were barefooted, thousands with fragments of shoes, and all without overcoats, blankets, or warm clothing. I could not bear to expose them to certain suffering and an uncertain issue."

In November, Meade sought, by a rapid and secret march, to surprise the Confederate army, now preparing to retire into winter quarters, but still greatly spread out. Lee, informed by Stuart of the movement in time, promptly concentrated his 30,000

veterans and 150 guns behind log breastworks erected on the densely wooded south bank of Mine Run. His original army, like Meade's, had recently been reduced by the dispatch of a large detachment to the West. When the Federal troops arrived in front of the quickly-devised fortifications, they found the barrier too strong to be assailed with hope of success, and they quietly withdrew to Culpeper Court-House. Winter now setting in in earnest, military operations in the eastern theatre of war came to an end for the year.

In the course of November, before the campaign in Virginia closed, occurred the great battle of Missionary Ridge, a victory of more far-reaching consequences than Gettysburg, and the real turning point of the war, because it assured the Federal supremacy in the West, where the Confederacy was ultimately to be conquered. The fall of Vicksburg, the battle of Missionary Ridge, and the retreat of the defeated Confederates to Dalton had left the entire area of the South outside of Georgia, the two Carolinas, Florida, and the lower half of Virginia in the enemy's possession. The Federals were now able to concentrate two great armies,—one against the forces in north Georgia, now led by Johnston; the other against the forces on the Rapidan, still led by Lee. Grant, having been appointed the Federal commander-in-chief, elected to assume personal direction of the troops then stationed at Culpeper Court-House; on his arrival there, in the spring of 1864, he found himself at the head of 120,000 men

supported by 316 pieces of artillery, against whom, Lee, now joined by Longstreet, fresh from the campaign in East Tennessee, could marshal only about 60,000 men and 224 pieces of artillery. These he had spread out all the way from Orange Court-House to Gordonsville, as he could not anticipate precisely where the first blow would be struck.

In Grant, Lee was confronted by a much greater antagonist than any he had previously fought. In tenacity, resolution, vigor, and energy, the newly appointed chief was incontestably the first of all the Federal commanders. The record of no other was adorned with such a series of triumphs as those which he had won at Fort Donelson, Vicksburg and Missionary Ridge. In his manner of warfare, he resembled some mighty driving ram, relentlessly directed against the opposing army. All the accounts which we have of his private life prove that he was a man of more than ordinarily kind heart and affectionate disposition, and yet in the campaign reaching from the Wilderness to Cold Harbor, he, in his unyielding determination to restore the Union at all costs, no more hesitated to send his soldiers to slaughter than if they had been so many automatons of wood or stone. It was the stern spirit of his Covenanter forefathers that disclosed itself in this apparently reckless sacrifice of human lives for the accomplishment of a supreme purpose. But vigorous and rapid and continuous as were the strokes which he delivered, the Army of Northern Virginia was to be destroyed, not so much by what he achieved

in the East as by what Sherman and Thomas accomplished in the West. No Missionary Ridge, no Nashville, were to tarnish Lee's career after Grant's arrival any more than they had tarnished that career before.

Grant himself was too wise to depreciate his opponent; from the beginning, he saw that there was but one way of vanquishing Lee; namely, by the resolute and persistent use of the almost inexhaustible Federal reserves in men and material regardless of their destruction. The Army of Northern Virginia had not simply to be defeated,—it had practically to be destroyed before it would yield. During the campaign's early stages, Grant announced his general plan to be "to hammer continuously against the armed force of the enemy and his resources until by mere attrition, if by nothing else, there would be nothing left for him" but to submit. He knew that the Federals could better afford to lose ten men and five cannon in battle than the Confederates one man and one cannon. A vainer, more ambitious, and a less sincere commander would never have used such plain and blunt words; but Grant's purpose was to save the Union, not to advance his own reputation by exploiting beforehand strategical and tactical schemes in which pure genius and not numbers was expected to play the first part. He went about that purpose with a singleness and directness that was utterly oblivious of all personal pretension. "Wherever Lee goes," he wrote to Meade, "there you will go too." Lee was to be the objective, not

Richmond, and if, after Cold Harbor, (perhaps earlier), he abandoned this policy, he did so only because he discovered that his opponent could not be overwhelmed even by the most lavish expenditure of the unlimited Federal resources. He declared, before crossing the Rapidan, that he would strike the enemy between that river and Richmond, "if Lee will stand." Whatever doubt he had entertained as to the latter's attitude was soon dispelled. Before many days had passed, instead of Grant going "where Lee was," it was Lee who was following close in Grant's track, and, in the end, always interposing between him and the Confederate capital.

Three courses were open to Grant on the threshold of the campaign: he could throw his army across the Rapidan and make a frontal assault on Lee's entrenchments; he could move around the Confederate left; or he could skirt the Confederate right. A direct attack, doubtful of issue at best, was certain to be attended with heavy loss of life. An advance around the left would only cause Lee to fall back on a line that would bring Grant no nearer Richmond. If, on the other hand, the Union leader could outflank the Confederate right, he would be able, not only to plant his army firmly between Lee and Richmond, but also to force Lee to join battle in the open country, where superior numbers were more likely to prevail. It is true that in such a movement, Grant would have to abandon the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, then his base of supply; but it would require only about ten days' rations, which

could be easily transported, before he would be in a position, after passing through the Wilderness, to form a new base on the Rappahannock ; and as he came nearer Richmond, he knew that he could shift that base, first to the York, and then to the James.

By the night of May 4th, the whole of the Federal army, with a part of its wagon train, had crossed the Rapidan. Lee did not attempt to dispute the passage. Why did he not take advantage of its confusion to attack? Because he had not forgotten the opportunity which Hooker, about twelve months before, by a similar plunge into the same thickets, though further east, gave the Confederates to destroy their enemy. The respective strength of the two antagonists was just as disproportionate then as it was now, and Lee hoped that the peculiar topography of the country would again serve him equally well in neutralizing the numerical disparity.

Grant would have to traverse about ten miles of jungle before he could emerge into an open region. This jungle, like the one surrounding Chancellorsville, had been formed by the use of the original growth of trees in feeding the now extinct fires of local iron furnaces. There were the same scraggy pines, scrub oaks, stunted hazel, and bristling chinquapins, in the midst of which the soldiers of the two armies were invisible to each other at half musket range, and generally not discernible even at half the length of a battalion. This wild region of deep shadow was haunted only by the bat, owl, and whippoorwill, the hare, fox, and deer. Here and

there, the surface under the heavy cloak of bushes was broken by a narrow ravine, through which a rivulet flowed to the Rapidan ; and here and there also, a little light found its way through the cuttings made in clearing the tracks for hauling wood to the smelters. The district was intersected by only two public highways, namely, the turnpike and the plank road that ran from Orange Court-House, by way of Chancellorsville, to Fredericksburg.

The Confederate commander was well content to see the Federal troops entangled in the intricacies of this wild tract ; first, because its topography was fully known to him, and, secondly, because it would entirely obstruct the use of cavalry and artillery,— two arms in which Grant possessed an almost overwhelming superiority. Lee, without difficulty, could have assailed the first half of the Federal army as soon as it had crossed the Rapidan, but to do so was to forego the chance of destroying the whole when it should become involved in the dense thickets on the south bank. In order to draw the enemy still deeper into the labyrinth, he, for a time, held back his own men out of sight under cover of the gloomy undergrowth ; but at the moment Grant was congratulating himself that he would be able to pass the Wilderness unmolested, and, without the loss of a man, plant his entire force beyond the Confederate right wing, a rush was made for his flank. Lee did not pause even for Longstreet to come up from Gordonsville, but attacked the entire Federal army with Hill's and Ewell's corps alone. From

this hour, that army, as long as it remained in the Wilderness, resembled a great boar charging in the underbrush the mastiffs which had brought him to bay.

Longstreet, who had only twelve miles to traverse, should have arrived on the ground that afternoon (May 5th), but instead did not appear until the next morning. During that interval, owing to his being away, the two corps engaged had been unable to strike the separated Federal wings an effective blow, and one had been on the edge of disaster. The co-operation of the whole Confederate army, small enough as a whole, compared with its antagonist's, was necessary to success. Grant, aware of Longstreet's absence, sought to overwhelm Hill and Ewell before they could be reinforced. Hancock threw himself on Hill, and a fierce contest, attended with equal fortune to each side, ensued until night fell. Ewell, who had taken the precaution to erect breastworks, was able, not only to repel the enemy's assault in his front, but also to drive him back some distance. That night the two armies held the positions which they had occupied in the morning, but Hancock had the foresight to protect his approaches by a strong line of entrenchment.

At dawn of the second day, Sedgwick and Warren advanced to attack Ewell, and Hancock, Hill. Burnside was ordered at the same time to press between the two Confederate corps, and then wheel to right or left as seemed best, and strike one or the other. Ewell stood firm in spite of the vigor of the

assault. Hill, confident that he would soon be reinforced by Longstreet, had neglected to throw up entrenchments in imitation of Hancock, and when attacked, was driven back in confusion. Lee observing this, rode forward to rally the troops. Just at this critical moment, the first division of Longstreet's corps came upon the ground at double quick. It was a body of Texans, and as they passed the commander-in-chief they saluted him with loud cheers; but it was not until they had advanced some distance that they perceived his intention to accompany them. "Go back, General Lee," rang out all along the charging line. "Go back; we will not go on unless you go back." A sergeant seized his bridle-rein and turned his horse in the direction of the rear. Yielding with reluctance to his men's entreaties, he slowly withdrew to a safer position. In a few minutes, Hancock, whose rapid forward movement had caused some confusion in his own ranks, was stopped and finally driven back, but reforming, advanced again.

Longstreet, taking advantage of the shelter offered by the cuttings of a disused railway penetrating that part of the forest, sent four brigades to assail Hancock's flank. Struck unawares, that section of the Federal line was thrown into disorder; and this soon extending to the remainder of Hancock's corps, the whole body, in considerable confusion, retreated behind the log breastworks, which fortunately for them, had been erected during the previous night. Longstreet ordered a general as-

sault on these entrenchments, but as he rode forward to overlook the movement, he was by mistake shot at by his own men, and so severely wounded that he had to be carried off the field. The delay in substituting a new commander gave the Federals time to strengthen their fortifications and to bring up reinforcements. Though successful at first in their next attack, the Confederates were finally baffled and retired. In the meanwhile, the dry leaves and brushwood underfoot having been set on fire by the repeated volleys, the gloom of the thick undergrowth was lit up by the flames, which caught the wounded and the dead in their progress, and cast a pall of smoke over the whole of the strange battle-ground.

The total result of the second day's contest was that Sedgwick and Warren had been checked, Burnside driven back to his original position, and Hancock repulsed and shut up in a precarious situation. At an expense of 10,000 men, the Confederates had inflicted a loss of 17,666 on their opponents. Had Burnside, Hooker, or McClellan been in command of the Army of the Potomac, it would, most probably, have now retreated to the Rappahannock.

But Grant was made of firmer metal; and he never for a moment forgot his numerical superiority. Rejecting a frontal attack as hopeless, he decided to move again to the left, a step made practicable only by the Federal command of the sea; for, had the Rappahannock, York, and James been closed by Confederate cruisers, the Army of the

Potomac would have been compelled to retire through an intricate region to its only possible base, the Orange and Alexandria Railway. As it was, although but seven days' rations remained, and thousands of wounded had to be transported by wagon, it was Grant's safest course to advance eastward; and in adopting this course, he was probably thinking more of his new line of communication by water than of the capture of Richmond. In spite of the depression which the latter event would have caused in the South, and in spite also of the loss of the valuable workshops and foundries situated in that city, it would undoubtedly have greatly prolonged the Confederacy's existence had Grant now succeeded in thwarting and keeping his army between Lee and that point. Had the Confederate capital been removed, after the battles in the Wilderness, to Danville or Raleigh, Lee's movements would no longer have been complicated by the strategical drawback of having to defend Richmond, and consequently he would have fallen back slowly to the line of the upper Staunton River to be nearer Johnston's army and the mountains, instead of being gradually drawn into the military morass of Petersburg, and there deprived forever of all power of uniting with that army when the coalition became imperative.

Lee, justly appreciating Grant's indomitable will and indefatigable persistence, and aware that he enjoyed his government's full confidence, and would be backed by its entire resources, felt no surprise

when Stuart reported that the Federal wagon train was moving, not northward, but eastward. Knowing that this was the first step toward a second flank march, Lee acted so energetically that, when the Federal Fifth Corps reached Spottsylvania on the morning of May 8th, it found the Confederate First Corps entrenched in front to bar its passage. Although Grant, by his first movement in the Wilderness, had succeeded in outflanking Lee, the latter, by his success in that battle, had gained such a position that he was now able to swing his army entirely round and plant it squarely in the Federal path.

The region in which the new operations began possessed more open spaces than the one so recently abandoned, and consequently there was more room for active manœuvres, and less obstruction in the use of cavalry and artillery. Lee's main line rested on a ridge crossing the neck of land between the Po and the Ny. His eye for the strongest defensive points in the topography of a country was never more clearly shown; here, as at Sharpsburg, the ground selected was exactly adapted to the number of his troops. If Grant attacked in front, he would expose his army to the risk of being repulsed with great slaughter; if on the flank, he would first have to make, across one or the other of the two streams, a reconnaissance in force that was liable to be overwhelmed before reinforcements could be hurried up. Such was the fate which nearly overtook one corps that boldly ventured to pass.

The only weak point in the Confederate line consisted of a salient resembling the inverted letter U projected northward. This salient, about a mile long and half a mile wide, was defended, on its western side, by Rodes's division of the Second Corps, and on its eastern by Johnson's. Its vulnerableness caught Grant's watchful eye at once, and he ordered it to be attacked by three divisions drawn up in double lines, supported at a distance of one hundred paces by twelve battalions formed in four lines. The centre was to make the rush, while each wing distracted the enemy in its immediate front. Breaking from the cover of a wood where it had been concealed, the column swept over the first line of Confederate entrenchments, and even succeeded in seizing the second; but, exhausted and unsupported, after capturing 1,200 prisoners and twenty guns, was driven back by a counterstroke delivered by Confederate brigades in reserve. At first, they held on to the front line of breastworks, but at night abandoned it.

Grant, not discouraged by the loss of 4,000 men in the previous attempt, decided to attack the apex of the salient with a greater force. An assaulting column, 20,000 strong, was formed just before daybreak of the 12th, in front of that position, which, according to the report of a deserter from Johnson's division stationed there, had been greatly weakened in anticipation of another flank movement by the Federal army. The artillery withdrawn had, however, really been returned. Although suspecting

the Federal design from noises overheard, the division was unable to withstand the assault when made, owing to the confusion caused by a heavy fog, which, at that early hour, enveloped every object. The great Federal wave, having overwhelmed the whole division, swept on irresistibly until it seemed as if the entire Confederate army would be split in two; but, fortunately for Lee, in making the salient, he had taken the precaution to throw up a line of entrenchments at a distance of half a mile in the rear. When the Federal column reached this point, the battalions had become mixed and the entire force was in a state of disorder.

It was a critical moment for the Confederates. General Lee, recognizing the peril and wishing to inspire his troops by his presence, placed himself at the head of General Gordon's column about to make a charge. That officer, seizing his bridle, exclaimed: "This is no place for you, General Lee." "Is it necessary for General Lee to lead this charge?" he then cried out to his men. "No! No!" was the unanimous response from the ranks; "we will drive them back if General Lee will only go to the rear." As he withdrew, greatly touched by their devotion, Gordon rode to the head of the division, and in that ringing voice which had been so often heard above the storm of battle, shouted: "Forward, march, and remember your promise to General Lee." The Federals were slowly pressed back to a spot which came to be known as the Bloody Angle from the desperate character of the struggle that took place

there. The ground was soon covered with heaps of dead and wounded, and the very trees were cut down by the volleys of bullets. Rodes and Gordon were reinforced by only three brigades, and although their troops, now separated from the enemy by a breastwork of logs alone, were assailed in front and enfiladed in reverse by the Federal artillery, they could not be dislodged. As soon as darkness fell, however, they raised a new line of entrenchments in their rear, and to this they withdrew before daybreak.

The Federals had lost 6,800 men, and the Confederates 4,600, in addition to the prisoners belonging to Johnson's division captured in the first Federal rush. The balance of success in the entire operations favored the Southern side.

Repulsed on both flanks, Grant was left in his original position by the new line of Confederate earthworks across the salient. Recognizing that a frontal assault on this new line would fail, he decided to manœuvre for an advantage. Hardly stopping to rest his fatigued and shattered troops, he ordered a large force to be concentrated on the following night (May 13th), at a point from which the Confederate right might be outflanked ; but before this point could be reached, several miles had to be traversed, and the Federal corps, instead of being in position by the next morning, were strung out in a state of exhaustion along the whole interval. Confederate troops were hurried up to the right wing, and the Federal plan had to be abandoned. Deferring further operations for three days, Grant

then decided to manœuvre again; but this time he ordered an attack on the Confederate centre, which he supposed had been weakened by the withdrawal of forces to protect the right. On the contrary, it had been strengthened by Lee, now put on his guard by the previous movement, and when the Federal troops came on, they were soon repulsed.

Thus ended the series of battles at Spottsylvania, a series that made up a short campaign of unexampled fury. It would be difficult to discover in the history of the entire war a course of operations in which the Confederate soldier's high qualities shone more brilliantly. Johnson's division, it is true, had been surprised, but every other assault had been successfully resisted, every breach had been promptly filled, and every broken line restored. The Confederate action had been characterized by extraordinary alertness, firmness, and resourcefulness; the Federal, by unsurpassed vigor, courage, and persistency. This series of battles, which resembled somewhat the series afterward occurring around Petersburg, revealed the vital importance of not imposing on the Confederate army the permanent defense of one point. As long as that army was mobile, its opponent could not gain time to erect formidable fortifications. Without Richmond to guard, Lee would have been in Meade's advantageous position before the battle of Gettysburg: he could have awaited attack behind temporary breastworks, easily held or abandoned as circumstances required.

The Confederate army's invincibility while engaged in the mobile defensive was silently acknowledged by Grant, when, on the 20th, notwithstanding the arrival of 40,000 fresh troops, he disappeared from Lee's front as completely as if no Federal soldier had ever been seen there. As he marched eastward, he pushed one corps forward a very considerable distance, in the hope that his energetic opponent would be tempted to attack before throwing up entrenchments. But Lee, moving on the interior lines, was satisfied to take position behind the North Anna River, with a view of disputing the passage, should Grant seek to force it. It was here for the first time during the campaign that he obtained reinforcements, which, however, numbered barely 9,000 men. From the Wilderness to Cold Harbor, the entire addition to his strength did not exceed 14,400. His army was now further weakened by the absence of his cavalry in pursuit of Sheridan, sent by Grant to break up the Virginia Central and Richmond and Fredericksburg Railroads in the Confederate rear. It was during this raid that Stuart, dispatched to intercept that officer, was killed.

Lee, when he halted behind the North Anna, extended his troops in an almost straight line some distance back from the river, but parallel with it. Two bridges spanned the stream opposite his right wing, while a ford was situated opposite his centre, and another about two and a half miles beyond his left. Grant, on arriving, advanced a corps across

the river by this more remote ford, and as these troops at once threw up entrenchments, the Confederates were prevented from driving them back. Had not sickness confined Lee to his tent at this moment, the assault of his soldiers, which lacked vigor, would perhaps have proved successful. Grant, encouraged, dispatched a second corps to the first's assistance, and a third was moved across the bridge opposite the Confederate centre. As their opponents were posted in a straight line with their several commands more or less separated, there would apparently be no difficulty in uniting the three Federal corps after the last two had also passed over the stream; but this anticipation was thwarted by a curious manœuvre of Lee: He drew back his troops after the manner of closing an umbrella, with the point resting upon the river; thus a double line, shaped like an obtuse angle, intervened between the two Federal corps stationed on the Confederate left, and the one Federal corps stationed on the Confederate right. The only way in which either Federal wing could reinforce the other would be by crossing the river twice, an operation that would consume three hours.

A favorable opportunity of assailing the three isolated Federal corps was now presented, but Lee was too ill to utilize it. "We must strike them," he exclaimed on his sick bed, "we must strike them. We must never let them pass us again." There was, however, no Jackson to take his place. Even Longstreet, not yet recovered from his wound, was

absent. Never had there been a more conspicuous illustration of the fact that Lee was the heart and mainspring of his army.

Grant, perceiving their danger, withdrew on the night of May 26th, the isolated corps. Again, he moved to the left, and again Lee followed on the interior lines. The Southern troops now took a position so near Richmond that Grant would be tempted to leave the Pamunkey far behind him; detained on that river, he would be led to reinforce Butler at City Point for an attack on the capital; but if detained on the Totopotomoy further inland, he would be unable to do this with the same ease. Moreover, Lee, by posting his army near Richmond, placed it where it could promptly assist that city's defenders, should Butler advance from the Appomattox. He had a force of only 45,000 men to repel the attack of the Federal army, numbering 112,000.

Grant now could not move to the left without leaving Richmond behind, a fact that shook his temper so far that he was led, as if by uncontrollable passion, to do what he himself afterward keenly regretted; namely, to advance directly on Lee's entrenched lines at Cold Harbor. Before the end of an hour, 13,000 Federal dead and wounded lay strewn on the ensanguined ground in front of the Confederate breastworks. A command to renew the assault, transmitted through the regular channels to the private soldiers, was received in silence, or followed by a feeble demonstration. Rank and file that had stoically bared their breasts to the previous

storm, tacitly declined to make so useless a sacrifice a second time; nor was this any reflection on their bravery and fortitude, but rather a proof of their correct instinct in protesting against such a reckless course.

Thus, in a rain of blood, was ended this terrible campaign. No wonder that Grant decided to abandon his original plan of "fighting it out on this line if it took all summer." The season was just beginning, and yet here was Grant, the incarnation of courage, firmness, and persistency, instead of going "where Lee was," as he had directed Meade to do, finding himself compelled to throw out a thick screen of cavalry to prevent Lee from intercepting him as he made a wide detour in order to break into Richmond, if possible, by the back door of Petersburg. In other words, after the appalling slaughter of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, and Cold Harbor, the Federal commander was forced to do what he might have done in May without the loss of a single soldier.

In reviewing the operations from the Rapidan to the Chickahominy, it is seen that, during their progress, Grant made four great flank movements in his effort to plant himself between Lee and Richmond, and he ended with a fifth in the advance to the James, when he had foregone all hope of breaking through the line of Confederate steel. His primary object had been to destroy the Army of Northern Virginia; but failing in that, to compel it to abandon the defense of its capital. In every battle, his force, both in men and artillery, was double that of

his opponent, and at times it was nearly treble. In spite of this fact, he had been baffled by Lee in every instance, and had the two armies been nearer numerical equality, the Federal would probably have been driven back in a shattered condition to the defenses of Washington. As it was, Lee, by the close of the campaign, had succeeded in killing and wounding as many Federal soldiers as he himself possessed men; in other words, one in nearly every three of the Federal army had been either destroyed or disabled by its determined antagonist. Had the Federal troops inflicted the same loss on their opponents, the Confederate army would have been annihilated.

As a rule, Lee remained throughout the campaign on the defensive; first, because his force was too small as compared with Grant's to allow him to assume the offensive: and, secondly, because he saw that the enemy did not shrink from attacking his entrenchments. His attitude resembled Meade's at Gettysburg and was precisely what the situation called for. At North Anna, however, sickness alone prevented him from assailing the isolated Federal corps; and after Cold Harbor, Grant was saved from a counterstroke only by the rapidity with which he effected a change of base. Lee, from start to finish, had exhibited extraordinary skill in running his defensive lines; at Spottsylvania, at North Anna, and at Cold Harbor alike, his opponent could not manœuvre against his flanks without crossing difficult streams, and thus dividing forces. In all the po-

sitions taken by Lee, he had relied as much on the country's topography as on the strength of his own entrenchments.

From one point of view alone had the campaign proved favorable to the Federal cause. If Grant was right in seeking to destroy the Confederate army by attrition, then that organization had undoubtedly been seriously reduced by his blows; but the same end could have been attained just as quickly by his sitting down permanently at Spottsylvania, and there repeating his frontal assaults until Lee's entire army had been killed or disabled. It is true that ten Federal soldiers would have perished to one Confederate, but what of that when the North could have better afforded to sacrifice ten than the South one? It is quite possible, however, that the Federal troops, after a series of unsuccessful attacks, accompanied by heavy loss, would have finally declined, as they did at Cold Harbor, further to make so appalling a sacrifice.

Swinton acknowledges that, at the close of the campaign, the Army of the Potomac, "shaken in its structure, its valor quenched in blood, and thousands of its ablest officers killed or wounded was the Army of the Potomac no more." And General Francis A. Walker, in his history of the Federal Second Corps, one of the very bravest participating in the conflict, declares that when this corps turned its face southward after Cold Harbor, "something of its pristine virtue had departed under the terrific blows that had been showered on

it. . . . Its casualties had numbered more than 400 a day for the whole period since it had crossed the Rapidan. Moreover, the confidence of the troops in their leaders had been severely shaken. They had again and again been ordered to attacks which the very privates in the ranks knew to be hopeless from the start. They had seen the fatal policy of assault all along the line persisted in even after the most ghastly failure, and they had almost ceased to expect victory when they went into battle."

When Grant set out for the James, there was considerable danger that the war party at the North would yield to the longing for peace which now, like a wave, swept over the Northern people, deeply depressed by the unexampled sacrifices of the last campaign. Federal success in the West alone, in some degree, restored the hope of final triumph. Had the contest been confined to the East, and to the armies of Lee and Grant, the feeling of confidence would perhaps not have returned : for never was the devotion to their commander stronger in the hearts of the Army of Northern Virginia than after the victory of Cold Harbor ; never was their admiration for his genius higher ; never were they themselves more steadfast, or more self-reliant ; never so capable of offering a successful resistance to the enemy's advance, had that enemy been restricted to the Army of the Potomac.

CHAPTER X

SIEGE OF PETERSBURG AND APPOMATTOX

LEE had never approved the view that Richmond's defense was imperative, not for strategic or even economic, but for political reasons. As soon as the capital's retention ceased to offer strategic advantages, he considered it unwise to hold it longer. It is true that Richmond contained numerous mills, foundries, and workshops, which only grew more valuable as the territory still under Confederate control shrank in area; but had the policy of protecting the city at all hazards adopted at the beginning, been afterward abandoned, and similar establishments erected in other cities, like Danville or Raleigh, more remotely situated from the Federal main lines of communication, the Confederate government's existence would, perhaps, have been indefinitely prolonged.

The capital's successful defense until the end undoubtedly gave greater dignity to that government within its own borders, but it exercised no influence whatever in inducing foreign powers to recognize the Confederacy, the only substantial political benefit which could be expected to flow from it. The defense of Washington as the Federal capital was a much more practical measure, for its capture would quite certainly have been followed by the recogni-

tion of the Confederacy and the removal of the blockade, two acts that, sooner or later, would have brought about Southern independence. After the battle of Cold Harbor, there was not the smallest prospect of foreign intervention, so that Richmond's abandonment would not have diminished the chance of success from the operation of favorable influences abroad, for there were no such influences at work.

In continuing his defense of the capital, all that Lee could expect was that, by repeating the slaughter of his last campaign, he might so shock Northern sensibilities that the peace party would finally prevail; but this hope, he knew, was dependent upon the Western army's securing an equal success, which was far from certain. Unless this success could be won by both armies during the next twelve months, the Confederacy's fast declining resources could not endure the strain to which they were now subjected, and must collapse altogether.

No one foresaw more clearly than Lee the final consequences of suffering Grant to concentrate below Richmond. "We must destroy the Federal army before they get to James River," he exclaimed to General Early immediately after Cold Harbor. "If they get there, it will become a siege, and then it will be a mere question of time." Once established south of the Appomattox, behind impregnable entrenchments, that army, he knew, could be recruited at leisure, as its line of communication, being a great waterway, could not even be threatened. The unlimited resources in the East at Grant's disposal

could, in such a position, be gradually accumulated until they would become overwhelming; and the more slowly he operated, the more certain was he of being ultimately assisted by the Federal western army, first, indirectly by its narrowing the field of Confederate supply and conscription; and afterward, directly by its joining hands with the forces in Virginia.

But the evils to be expected from a siege were not confined to the ever-increasing Federal numerical superiority; Lee was fully aware that his troops' *morale* was far more apt to be lowered by such a siege than by a strenuous campaign in the open field. It would be a life of equal exposure, but of less active enterprise to serve as a diversion. Starvation would overshadow the permanent trenches more darkly even than the temporary; there would be more time for the soldiers to become discouraged by brooding over the South's declining prospects; and desertions would grow more common, either because the privations would seem more unbearable, or because the dangers overhanging the families at home, through the advance of the other Federal armies, would appear closer at hand.

Had Lee, after Grant's safe arrival at the James, followed the suggestions of his own judgment, instead of dispatching Early to the Valley to oppose Sigel and Hunter, and afterward to threaten Washington, he would have retired toward the upper waters of the Staunton, where the foothills were peculiarly adapted to defensive operations. There he

could have guarded the sources of supply in the Confederacy's remaining territory, and in an emergency joined hands with Johnston. Had his army been mobile, not only could it have staved off starvation without difficulty, for there was no lack of food in the country, but it could have constrained Grant to diminish his fighting force by leaving behind, on an ever-lengthening line, large detachments to defend his communications in a hostile region. Lee had just reason for asserting that had he been able to entrench his troops in the back hills, he could have prolonged the war for twenty years.

Mr. Davis was chiefly responsible for the two acts that precipitated the Confederacy's final destruction; namely, the continued defense of Richmond after Cold Harbor, and the displacement of Joseph E. Johnston before Atlanta. Prudence and caution were the qualities needed in handling the Western army at this time, and these were qualities which Johnston possessed in an extraordinary degree; had he remained in command, it is not probable that Sherman would have been allowed to reach the sea without vigorous opposition. With Johnston obstructing the Federal advance upon Atlanta, and Lee planted firmly in the region south of Lynchburg, Sherman's march through Georgia and Sheridan's raid in the Shenandoah Valley would not have occurred so soon, if at all. It was these two events alone that assured the reëlection of Mr. Lincoln and the triumph of the Northern war party: the one was made possible by Mr. Davis's removal of Johnston;

the other by his insistence upon the defense of Richmond, of which the siege of Petersburg was merely the closing incident.

On April 4th of the following year, after Mr. Davis had been compelled to abandon Richmond, he issued at Danville a proclamation in which he declared that the South "had now entered on a new phase of the struggle. Relieved from the necessity of guarding particular points, our army will be free to move from point to point to strike the enemy in detail far from his base." These words were penned before the writer had been informed of the closing scene at Appomattox ; but even had that event not occurred so soon, they came too late to aid the Confederacy's moribund cause. Had this proclamation been issued before the siege of Petersburg began, although the spirit of the Southern people would have been depressed by the evacuation of Richmond, the spirit of the Northern people correspondingly elated, and the Confederate resources in munitions of war seriously crippled, nevertheless the life of the Confederacy would have been prolonged, and the South would have gained, if not independence, pacification on terms that would have secured her readmission to the Union on a footing of perfect equality, with compensation for her emancipated slaves. Instead of resuming her old position as a conquered country, she would have reentered the circle of states with all the prestige of the most heroic struggle recorded in modern times.

It was unfortunate for the Confederacy that Lee

at this supreme hour could not have been as pertinacious as Mr. Davis in insisting upon carrying out his own plans. His influence with the Southern people was never more commanding than after Cold Harbor, and yet never apparently was he, the South's only pillar of fire, more subservient to the authorities in Richmond, who, at that fateful moment, were of less real importance to the cause than an equal number of the humblest privates in the Army of Northern Virginia. Lee was not a man to act in a half-hearted way when he found himself out of sympathy with the tasks imposed on him by his civil and military superiors; he now threw himself into the measures necessary for Richmond's defense with all the ardor, energy, and singleness of purpose distinguishing his conduct in the great campaign so recently closed.

During the previous spring, Butler, at the head of 36,000 men, had occupied Bermuda Hundred at the mouth of the Appomattox, with the intention of first cutting Richmond's southern communications, and then forming a junction with the Army of the Potomac north of that city. Breaking camp on May 16th, he was soon attacked by Beauregard with a much smaller force, and driven back to his entrenchments in the narrow peninsula between the Appomattox and the James. Having fortified the neck of this peninsula, Beauregard dispatched two divisions and one brigade to Lee, then posted behind the North Anna River. Butler, however, was able to escape from "his hermetically sealed bottle"

by sending troops across the Appomattox on an unsuccessful expedition against Petersburg.

This occurred on June 9th. In a few days, the advance corps of Grant's army began to cross the James. As soon as the First Corps, consisting of 17,000 troops, with a division of cavalry, had got over, Butler ordered it to renew the attack on Petersburg, whose defenses at this time were confined to a circle of redans, connected by infantry parapets, drawn at a distance of two miles from the boundaries of the town. The assault by this vanguard was partially successful. The First Corps was soon reinforced by the Second, and had the two attacked at once with vigor, Petersburg would now have fallen, and with the aid of the troops hurried up by Grant, permanently held. The Confederate communications with the South by way of the Weldon Railroad would have been immediately cut, and Richmond's evacuation made necessary,—if not at once, then at the end of a few weeks. The whole course of subsequent operations would have been diverted from the channel they actually followed, and Lee enabled to enter upon the unhampered campaign which was the only hope of prolonging the Confederacy's existence. In response to the wishes of the Confederate authorities he, for a time, might have attempted to defend Richmond, but the Federal army, by working around toward the Danville Railroad, would soon have compelled him to retire either along that railway, or the one running toward Farmville.

The Federal failure to capture Petersburg on June 15th, though apparently a Confederate success, was in reality, as the event was to prove, a blow to Southern prospects. The Confederate army was still elated by the issue of the campaign ending with Cold Harbor. There was perhaps not an officer or private in it who did not think that the defense of Petersburg was ordered more for political than for military reasons, and who, aware of this fact, would have felt no discouragement had it now fallen. But that result was to be deferred until the waning strength of the Confederacy had been completely sapped.

Concentrating 14,000 infantry in the city, and rapidly constructing a new line of entrenchments, Beauregard was thus able, on the 17th, successfully to resist a fierce assault by nearly the whole Federal army ; but after night fell, he retired to a third line of breastworks, erected in the rear at a distance varying from 500 to 1,000 yards. Hill's corps arriving on the following day, a second assault by three Federal corps was repulsed. Grant, by these different attacks, had lost about 10,000 men. He now, for the first time, it would seem, perceived that the frontal assault was proportionately far more destructive to his own army than to Lee's, and that a succession of similar repulses would, by shaking confidence in his capacity, quite probably subject him to the fate of McClellan, Pope, Burnside, Hooker and Meade. The danger of defeat was now greater than ever, as it was only too plain that the

new recruits were, in fire and resolution, quite unequal to the veterans who had passed through the last campaign. These recruits had unwisely been formed into separate regiments instead of being distributed among the old.

Grant had two great objects in view in his plan of capturing Richmond; first, to break up the Central Railway, the Confederate line of western communication, and secondly, the Weldon road running south from Petersburg. This would leave only the Richmond and Danville and the Southside Railways to support the Confederate army; but with the two former roads in Federal hands, Grant knew that Lee would be forced to retire in order to escape investment. His attempt to destroy the Central Railway had for a time failed; Sheridan was checked at Trevilians by Hampton, and Hunter driven by Early into West Virginia. Nor were his own efforts to seize the Weldon Railway crowned with immediate success. Having abandoned the frontal attack, by which alone that road might have been captured at a single blow, he doubtless expected only slow results from the new plan he had now adopted. Lee held Petersburg in such a manner that all the railroads entering the city were fully protected by the interposition of his entrenchments. In order to get around to the Confederate flank, where the Weldon Road came out on its way toward the Carolinas, it was necessary for Grant to throw up breastworks running first directly southward, and then, at a certain point, turning and running

directly westward. These breastworks must be so strong that they could be easily held by a comparatively small force while his main body should be engaged at the western end in seizing new ground for the extension of entrenchments, behind which they might crawl nearer and nearer to the railway.

The line of Federal fortifications in front of Petersburg was perhaps the strongest of its length ever erected on the North American continent. All the engineer's art was exhausted in its construction. It was a system of gigantic redans chained together by powerful parapets, whose approaches were obstructed by heavy abatis, the whole defended by siege guns as well as by ordinary artillery. Back of this great earthwork ran a telegraph line to hasten the transmission of orders from centre to wing with a view to perfect concert of action. Practically, the obstacle formed by the presence of James River to the dispatch of troops from wing to wing was removed by the laying of a large pontoon bridge; while the railroad connecting Petersburg with City Point afforded rapid means for the distribution of the enormous supplies of food, clothing, and ammunition almost daily arriving at the latter place in fleets of transports for the use of the Federal army.

On the other hand, Lee, who, in the end, must draw out his line thirty-five miles in order to defend both Petersburg and Richmond, had few facilities for sending instructions quickly, or for concentrating his troops promptly to repel attack on a particular point; but even if he had possessed such facili-

ties, the force at his disposal was relatively so small that he could strengthen resistance at one spot only by dangerously weakening it at another. It was upon this fact that Grant, who was determined to use his numerical superiority to the fullest, counted most confidently for ultimate success. The first point which he wished to seize was the Weldon Railway, and to accomplish this, he, throughout the siege, had recourse to attempted surprises of Lee's left wing on the north side of the James. Every Confederate soldier called away from the right wing to meet these attacks, only made it less difficult for the opposing Federal force there to push its line of earthworks farther toward the goal.

So enormous was the numerical disproportion between the two armies that Grant had at his beck several corps, which, without weakening his own position anywhere, he could move from right to left, or left to right as he chose. Lee could do this only by practically denuding his line at some one point. And yet down to the battle of Five Forks, many months after the siege began, he baffled every effort of his energetic and persevering antagonist either to surprise or outflank him; and this, too, with troops steadily diminishing in number and suffering from prolonged exposure, without proper clothing, and on the verge of starvation. The radical alteration in Grant's manner of warfare, as illustrated in his operations before Petersburg, constitutes the most remarkable tribute ever paid to the firmness, valor, and constancy of the Army of

Northern Virginia, and to the genius and energy of its commander.

The first great Federal turning movement began on June 21st. The Second and Sixth Corps were ordered to advance from the western end of the Federal entrenchments and endeavor to seize the Weldon Railway. In marching, a large gap, owing to the character of the country traversed, arose between the two bodies of troops. Hill took prompt advantage of the opportunity which this presented; leaving Wilcox's division to protect the railroad from the Sixth Corps's attack, he fell with Mahone's division upon the Second's exposed flank, and succeeded in rolling it up from left to right. After a heavy loss this corps was able to resume the position it had held in the morning, but next day, it again advanced and reoccupied the entrenchments thrown up before Hill's assault. Another permanent step westward was thus taken by the Federal army. In the meanwhile, the Sixth Corps had been able to plant itself within a mile and a half of the Weldon Railway, but could press forward no farther.

Wilson, dispatched at the head of 5,500 horsemen on a raid to destroy the Richmond and Danville Railroad, met with even less success in accomplishing his principal object. Stopped at Staunton River by the firm resistance of the local militia, he was, on his return, compelled to make a wide detour, harassed at every step by the horsemen of W. H. F. Lee. In attempting to evade Hampton, who stood

in his way, he ran upon Fitzhugh Lee, posted at Reams Station with one cavalry division and two infantry brigades. In the battle that followed, he lost 1,500 men and twelve pieces of artillery, and it was only by a circuitous route that the remnant of his force was able to regain the main army.

The heat now became excessive, and Grant decided to make no further flank movements for the present. He was the more inclined to relax, as his army had been weakened by the dispatch of a large body of troops to Washington to defend that city from the incursion of General Early, who had even then reached its first line of fortifications. At this moment, the Federal capital was in more danger of falling than the Confederate. But if Lee had hoped that he would be able, by that campaign, to arouse Mr. Lincoln's apprehensions and thereby reduce the size of the Federal army in front of Petersburg to a point which would permit him gradually to transfer his own troops to Piedmont, if not to the Valley itself, that expectation was soon dispelled by the declining fortunes of Early's small command. The manœuvre causing McClellan's recall from Harrison's Landing could not now be successfully repeated.

Disappointed in his first flank movement, Grant resumed, with increased energy, the work of extending his entrenchments on the left, and advancing his siege operations in the centre. It was no longer the man of Missionary Ridge and Spottsylvania, the bold, resolute, and even reckless fighter, but rather a new McClellan of the Chickahominy,

more reliant on siege guns and breastworks than on the sword and musket. He now even descended to burrowing to produce a breach in the enemy's fortifications; a mine, 511 feet in length and charged with eight thousand pounds of powder was excavated to a point situated directly under a Confederate bastion. The plan adopted was to rush a large body of men through the opening as soon as the explosion occurred, and seize the rising ground situated not far behind this part of the Confederate entrenchments. In order to weaken the Southern defense at this spot, Grant dispatched the Second Corps to the north side of the James for the purpose of threatening Richmond in that quarter. Lee, to meet this new danger, at once withdrew all troops from the fortifications of Petersburg except one cavalry and three infantry divisions.

Informed of this by spies, Grant thought the hour had come for setting off the mine. He was not aware that his operations were known to the Confederates, and that a line of batteries had been erected behind the threatened salient which would hurl shells into the advancing column's face and flank simultaneously. The explosion occurred at 4:40 in the morning, a regiment of Confederate soldiers was blown up, and a crater 150 feet in length, 60 in width, and 25 in depth formed. Two or three hundred yards of the Confederate line on each side of this great hole had to be abandoned at once; but before the assaulting column could enter the breach, the defenders, rallying, began to

assail the advancing ranks with their batteries, and the Federals, while able to seize the deserted entrenchments next to the crater, found it impossible to occupy the rising ground in the rear.

The first three divisions attacking had been composed of white troops; a fourth, composed of black, now came forward, but in a few minutes many of the negro soldiers, appalled by the terrible cannonade, took refuge in the great hole. The Eighteenth Corps, advancing to their support, succeeded in carrying a part of the Confederate line on the right, but were forced to retire in consequence of a panic seizing their comrades on the left, which soon involved themselves. One brigade alone stood its ground, but in a short time, by Mahone's vigorous action, this part of the assaulting column also was compelled to retreat. No Federal troops now remained within the Confederate lines except those who had fallen or jumped into the crater. Altogether 4,000 had been killed or disabled in the unfortunate enterprise.

Although Lee was constantly threatened with attack by Grant along his Petersburg and Richmond lines, he did not hesitate to reinforce Early operating in the Valley. Sheridan had been appointed to the Federal command in that quarter, and for his opponent's little army of 12,000 men, had 40,000 to show, a disproportion which could ultimately lead to but one result, unless Early should develop the energy, promptness, and resourcefulness of a second "Stonewall" Jackson. By this time, Lee had aban-

doned all hope of being able gradually to draw off his own army, detachment by detachment, to the foothills, by compelling Grant to weaken his lines on the Appomattox. In retaining Early in the Valley, his object seems now to have been simply to prevent Sheridan from coöperating with Grant by a march upon Richmond from the north side, or by a grand cavalry sweep from Lynchburg to Danville, and thence eastward toward Weldon, in order to cut all the Confederate lines of communication with the Carolinas and Georgia.

It is doubtful whether either of these apprehended movements would have been as permanently injurious to Confederate prospects as the upshot of the Valley campaign. Sheridan's success was the most powerful of all the influences that revived the hopes of the Northern war party, and assured Mr. Lincoln's reëlection. Taken with Sherman's march to the sea and Hood's defeat at Nashville, it signified the early and final ruin of the Southern cause. Perhaps, it would have been wiser had Lee in person assumed command of the Confederate troops stationed in the Valley, as his presence there would certainly have led Grant to weaken his army before Petersburg to a greater extent than any other course of action on his antagonist's part.

Grant must have been afraid that Lee, in dispatching to Early's assistance as many men as he could spare, had such a design in mind, for he now began to repeat his attacks on the Confederates with extraordinary vigor, seemingly to show his opponent the

danger to which such a loss of strength exposed him. To produce the impression that he was withdrawing troops for Washington's defense, Grant sent the Second Corps to City Point as if to embark, but, after nightfall, transported it up the river to the vicinity of Chaffin's Bluff to join the Tenth Corps in an assault on the Confederate entrenchments in that quarter of the field. Lee, suspecting his antagonist's object, hurried Mahone's infantry and two cavalry divisions to the spot he expected to be attacked, and these, combining with the troops already on the ground, found no difficulty in stopping the Federal advance. Grant, however, ordered Hancock to remain on the north side in order to induce Lee to retain there the reinforcements drawn from his extreme right, as this would leave that part of the Confederate line,—the most vital of all, as commanding the Confederate base of supply,—in a weakened condition, and, therefore, the more exposed to disaster.

No incident during the siege shows more plainly than this manœuvre the Federal numerical superiority and the necessity on Lee's part of constant vigilance to neutralize the disparity. When Grant, on August 18th, sought to take advantage of the supposed diminished strength of his opponent's right by advancing Warren's Corps to the Weldon Road for the purpose of tearing it up, Lee, by hurrying back Mahone's division, and bringing forward every available man, was able to disconcert the movement for a time. It was not long, how-

ever, before the Federals succeeded in pushing their line of entrenchments up to the railway; but the Confederates were still able to use the road by sending their wagons by a circuit to a point some miles to the southward. An attempt by Grant to break up the railway so far toward Weldon as to make it useless even by wagon, met with severe disaster at Reams Station, where the Federal force was saved from destruction only by Hancock's gallantry. This put an end for some time to the Federal effort to close the Weldon Railroad.

Disconcerted on one side, Grant, with characteristic persistency, turned almost immediately to the other. Transporting to the James's north bank a part of two corps, with a cavalry division, he succeeded, on August 30th, in capturing Fort Harrison, but was repulsed before Fort Gilmer. Lee having hurried up reinforcements from his extreme right to resist this attack, Grant, following his usual plan, took advantage of the reduced strength in that quarter to advance Warren in force across the Weldon Railroad to seize the Boydton Turnpike, a point nearer to the Southside Railway, and also one whose possession would make the Confederate circuit by wagon to the Weldon longer and more difficult. Driven back at first by Hill, Warren returned next day and threw up a new line of entrenchments, which were afterward connected with the main line now reaching as far as the Weldon Railroad.

Grant, thinking that he was now in position to seize the Southside Railway, detached for that pur-

pose 32,000 infantry, with a cavalry division, a force nearly equal to the entire Confederate army. A part of this body, commanded by Hancock, in advancing against the bridge at Burgess Mill, exposed its flank to assault, and was driven back in great confusion. Only a retreat at night saved it from further disaster, as the Confederates under Hill were rapidly concentrating to strike a second blow. A simultaneous attack had been made on the Confederate entrenchments on the James's north bank, but this had been attended with even heavier loss. Thus, in Federal discomfiture, the operations before Petersburg and Richmond were closed for the winter.

During five months, Grant had been persistently and energetically attempting to compel Lee to abandon the defense of Richmond. He had made three great flank attacks on the Confederate right wing, and three on the left; and these movements to left and right respectively had, as a rule, been practically simultaneous, or at least following so closely upon each other as to make possible the utmost use of the necessity thus imposed on Lee to weaken one part of his line in order to strengthen another. In each manœuvre, Grant had been firmly opposed, and his success had not been proportionate to his numerical superiority; indeed, all that he had accomplished on his right had been the capture of Fort Harrison, and on his left, the extension of his entrenchments across the Weldon Railroad, without, however, closing that road, beyond a few miles, to

Confederate possession. The principal frontal assault, that at the crater, had been repelled with heavy Federal losses. Had the influences brought to bear to destroy the Army of Northern Virginia been confined to those set at work by the Army of the Potomac alone, it seems quite certain that the life of the former organization would have been greatly, perhaps indefinitely, prolonged. But there were other factors now operating which were to be even more effective in terminating its existence.

First, the end of Confederate conscription had been reached. Enrolment, which began with persons between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five, had, in February, 1864, been extended to persons between the ages of seventeen and fifty. "They have robbed the cradle and the grave to get their present force," said Grant during the progress of the siege. But even if conscription had not already been carried so far, the spirit of the Southern people at large toward the end of 1864, was so depressed it is not likely that any addition to the army would have added materially to its efficiency. It was observed that the new conscripts in the trenches at Petersburg, who had joined the ranks with the hopeless feeling prevailing outside, were an element of weakness and not of strength. The number of desertions steadily increased; chiefly, however, because the advance of Sherman's army had made so many of the soldiers anxious for the safety of their families residing on the line of that devastating march.

Lee, in February, 1865, advocated the enlistment of negroes, and the Confederate Congress assented, but the measure was passed too late to be of use. Had it been adopted early in the war, as it should have been, the field of Federal enrolments would have been sensibly curtailed, and the Confederate armies supplied with a body of troops, who, in return for their freedom, would have fought at least as well for one side as the other. By the end of the winter of 1864–5, the force under Lee did not exceed 37,000 men. At this moment, Grant had in hand, or in easy reach, not less that 150,000; 20,000 additional could, in a few days, be brought up from the Valley; while Thomas, who had overwhelmed Hood at Nashville on November 15th, would, by an advance through southwest Virginia, as he designed, be able to swell the whole number to 200,000. Sherman was approaching from Savannah with 80,000 more. Against this combined host, under the leadership of Grant, Sherman, Sheridan and Thomas, Lee and Johnston, together, could oppose only 65,000 troops.

Secondly, the Army of Northern Virginia was now only half-fed, half-clothed, and half-shod. Six hundred Confederate soldiers behind the fortifications of Petersburg received hardly as much food as was supplied to one hundred Federals. The daily single ration did not exceed one pound of flour, and one-quarter of a pound of beef. Not infrequently, three days would pass without any distribution of meat at all. In some regiments, not more than

fifty men were in possession of shoes, while the great majority wore clothes held together by the rudest patching.

Hopeless of reinforcement; exposed to sleet and snow in the trenches; lacking in nourishing fare; scantily clad; without proper medicines in case of sickness; and racked by the thought that their loved ones at home might soon be subjected to all the perils raised by the Federal armies' advance from the West and South, it seems extraordinary that the Army of Northern Virginia should, after the winter of 1864-5 set in, have continued at all to maintain its organization in the face of the overwhelming numbers in its front. The soldiers must have known that the Confederate cause was doomed to complete destruction. The constancy which they showed under such dreadful circumstances was due principally to their devotion to Lee. "I can but describe his influence," records Colonel Marshall, of his staff, "by saying that such was the love and veneration of the men for him, that they had come to look upon the cause as General Lee's cause, and they fought for it because they loved him. To them, he represented cause, country, and all." In obedience to the proclamation which he issued at this dark hour, they continued to "oppose constancy to adversity, fortitude to suffering, and courage to danger."

As the dark cloud was rolling up from the South, carrying in its bosom a storm of destruction, more blasting than any which ever issued from the Libyan

deserts, Lee was appointed on February 9, 1865, commander-in-chief of all the Confederate armies. The power of the office was conferred too late. He, however, still hoped to strike an effective blow, in conjunction with Johnston, by attacking Sherman in North Carolina before Grant could come up, and then turning upon Grant, inflict a disaster upon his army also. It was a desperate expectation, but the only one possibly tenable; continuation in the trenches of Petersburg signified ruin as soon as Sherman could trample down Johnston, and assail Lee in the rear. The Confederate leader would have abandoned his position in February, but for the emaciated condition of his draught animals, and the almost bottomless mud of the roads at that season. By this time, the Federal entrenchments had been extended as far westward as Hatcher's Run. The Southern line of defense was now drawn out to thirty-five miles, and hardly one thousand men to the mile remained for its protection.

In order to cause the withdrawal of Federal troops from the path of his proposed retreat by creating an urgent need for their presence in a distant part of the field, Lee, on March 25th, directed Gordon to lead an assaulting column against Fort Steadman, situated near the Federal centre. The fortification was captured, but the effort to seize the hill in the rear failed; no fresh troops were moved up to Gordon's support; and he was compelled to evacuate the ground he had won. Grant, suspecting Lee's general design, now concentrated on the extreme left

an enormous force to obstruct, if not to close, the Confederate line of retreat. He had been heavily reinforced during the winter, and Sheridan, when the spring opened, had also joined him, after driving the last remnant of Early's army from the Valley. Never was he in so good a position to make a powerful simultaneous attack all along the Confederate entrenchments with his stationary corps, while he hurried forward several mobile ones to strike a particularly heavy blow at some selected point.

As soon as Lee detected Grant's movement of troops westward, he did not hesitate to weaken still further his attenuated infantry line in order to strengthen his extreme right, always the most important part of his position. Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry was also dispatched to Five Forks in the same direction to oppose Sheridan, now stationed on the Federal left, and here he was soon joined by five infantry brigades under Pickett and a cavalry force under W. H. F. Lee and Rosser. Together Pickett and Fitzhugh Lee drove a part of Sheridan's command, in great confusion, back to Dinwiddie Court-House, where Sheridan himself, with much difficulty, had been resisting attack ; and so precarious did his position now become that as soon as night arrived, he sent for reinforcements in order to insure his own safe return to the Federal army. When darkness fell, the Confederates went back to Five Forks, where very unwisely they occupied ground exposed on three sides, including the side facing their line of retreat. By next morning (April 1st) the enemy

had concentrated, and now in overwhelming numbers confronted them from these three sides. In vain, the Confederates strove to break through. Crushed by the treble collision, they gave way and the few escaping death or capture, dispersed in the woods. Such was the consequence of Pickett's fatal mistake in halting in an unprotected position four miles away from the main Confederate line.

The Federals were now able to seize the Southside Railroad, which made the further retention of Petersburg by the Confederates impracticable. Grant, afraid lest his antagonist should throw the greater part of his army on Sheridan in order to clear the road for retreat, began at ten o'clock the same night a fierce artillery fire along the whole of his line; and this was followed up next morning (April 2d) by a determined assault, which forced Lee to draw his troops back to the entrenchments situated within the city's boundaries. "It has happened as I told them at Richmond it would," he remarked somewhat bitterly to a staff officer as he slowly retired to this last refuge; "the line has been stretched until it has broken." That night, he withdrew from Petersburg at the head of a force barely numbering 30,000 men. They had not gone far when they observed in the heavens toward Richmond the reflection of a great conflagration, for that city had been evacuated and set on fire. It was with a feeling of relief that the soldiers found themselves once more in the open fields. The trees were now budding, and the grass springing up luxuri-

antly. The freshness and beauty of nature inspired the commander, officers, and privates alike with new hope, which, however, was destined soon to be dashed.

It was Lee's intention to retire southward by the Richmond and Danville Railroad. On arriving at Amelia Court-House, where food had been ordered to be accumulated, he found none, and a day was lost in scouring the country for a supply. When the advance again began, Sheridan had succeeded in barring the line of retreat to Danville, and Lee was compelled to strike across country to Farmville on the Southside Railway, in the hope of uniting with Johnston on the south bank of the Staunton River in Pittsylvania County.

Although the only ration which could now be given to each soldier was a handful of raw corn, no word of discontent reached the commander's ears. The army resumed its march in silence, but with no apparent diminution of confidence. The roads being heavy, and the streams swollen, the wagon train ahead made very slow progress, and at every turn the troops behind had to halt and to beat off the Federal attack, now directed against both rear and flank. At Sailor's Creek, what remained of one corps and a part of another, were surrounded and made prisoners by the swarming pursuers, but the main body pressed bravely on under Lee in person. Upon passing Farmville, where for the first time after leaving Petersburg, proper food was obtained, he succeeded in repulsing Humphreys's corps,

which obstructed his path; but the delay thus caused enabled Sheridan to advance and capture the Confederate supplies accumulated at Appomattox Court-House. When Lee reached this point, he found that large bodies of cavalry and infantry had been posted athwart his line of retreat. He decided, however, to make one more effort to break through the cordon of 75,000 men now surrounding him; but when, on the morning of the 9th, Gordon and Fitzhugh Lee drove back the horsemen, they found themselves confronted with an impenetrable mass of foot soldiery.

Such was the last military movement of the Army of Northern Virginia, now dwindled to 8,000 men with arms in their hands ready for duty. Lee had succeeded in reaching a point one hundred miles from the place of starting, and it is the testimony of all who saw him during the retreat, that never had he appeared more grandly heroic. "All eyes were raised to him for deliverance," one witness has recorded. "He alone was expected to provide food for the starving army, and rescue from a powerful and eager enemy. Under the accumulation of difficulties, his courage seemed to expand, and wherever he appeared, his presence inspired the weary with renewed energy to continue the toilsome march. During these trying scenes, his countenance wore its habitual calm, grave expression. Those who watched his face to catch a glimpse of what was passing in his mind could gather thence no trace of his inner sentiments."

Indeed, his courage never failed him. Believing the troops' extrication to be hopeless, some of his officers, in order to lighten his responsibility and soften the pangs of defeat, suggested through General Pendleton that negotiations should be opened for the surrender of the remnants of the army. This was only a few days before the surrender actually occurred. "We have yet too many bold men to think of laying down our arms," was his reply; and when Grant made a similar suggestion at Farmville, he answered that "he did not think the emergency had yet arisen" to justify submission. Lee was really relying upon a bold front to secure the best terms. When it was argued that this might be soonest effected by the dispersion of his troops in guerilla warfare, he replied: "No, that will not do. It must be remembered we are Christian people. We have fought this fight as long and as well as we knew how. We have been defeated. For us as a Christian people, there is but one course to pursue. We must accept the situation. These men must go home and plant a crop, and we must proceed to build up our country on a new basis."

"How easily I could get rid of this and be at rest," he said to a member of his staff in a moment of profound depression. "I have only to ride along the line and all will be over. But it is our duty to live, for what would become of the women and children of the South if we were not here to protect them?" And again he said in the same sad hour: "Human virtue should be equal to human ca-

lamity," a sentiment illustrated in his own conduct throughout the remainder of his life, to a degree never before or since surpassed. When he perceived that the end could no longer be staved off, he bent his spirit to the inevitable. "O General," exclaimed some one to him when he announced his intention of giving up his sword, "what will History say of the surrender of this army in the field?" "That is not the question," he replied. "The question is, is it right? If it is right, I will take all the responsibility."

As man and patriot, Grant, like Lee, was fully equal to all the highest demands upon character in that searching hour. The victor bore himself with as much true dignity as the vanquished. No one understood more thoroughly than he the valor, fortitude, and constancy of the Army of Northern Virginia. To have that army at his mercy at last might well have raised undisguised exultation in his mind, and also called up irrepressible visions of the most dazzling political honors. If such natural and justifiable thoughts occurred to him, there is no proof of the fact. "I felt like anything," he himself said, "rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly, and suffered so much for their cause,"—generous-hearted words that will be cherished by all his reunited countrymen to the remotest generations. Throughout those memorable scenes he remained, what he had always been,—quiet, modest, unpretending, and magnanimous. "His whole object," according to

a distinguished Confederate officer who was present, "seemed to be to mitigate as far as lay in his power the bitterness of defeat and to soothe as far as he could the lacerated susceptibilities of Lee."

As for the Confederate commander, he bore himself under those sad and trying circumstances with his usual firmness and dignity, without a trace of temper or mortification. "His demeanor," says a member of General Grant's staff, present at the interview, "was that of a thoroughly self-possessed gentleman, who had a very disagreeable duty to perform, but was determined to get through with it as well and as soon as he could." Dressed in a new uniform, with an ornate sword at his side, the striking beauty of his person made his quiet but imposing bearing all the more memorable. There was no offer of the sword, as the provisions of the surrender permitted the retention by the Confederate officers of their side arms.

When Lee returned to his own lines, he was received with a shout of welcome, which died into a sad silence when his recent mission was recalled. With head bare and tears flowing down his cheeks, he said, "Soldiers, we have fought through the war together. I have done the best for you I could." The men crowded about him. Many wept; while hundreds attempted to take his hand or touch his person, or even his horse. Overcome by his veterans' grief, he said to an officer present: "I could wish that I were numbered with the slain of the last battle. No," he interrupted himself, "we must

live for our afflicted country." Not many hours afterward, he issued a touching farewell addressed to his heroic army. The next day he set out for Richmond. When on the second morning, a little group of horsemen appeared on the farther side of the pontoon bridge at that place, the rumor began to spread through the city that General Lee was among them. Hundreds, silent and bareheaded, gathered along the route he must take on his way to his residence. "There was no excitement," says an eye-witness, "no hurrahing, but as the great chief passed, a deep, loving murmur, greater than this, arose from the heart of the crowd. Taking off his hat, and simply bowing his head, the man, great in adversity, passed silently to his own door. It closed on him, and his people had seen him for the last time in battle harness."

CHAPTER XI

AFTER THE WAR

DURING forty years, General Lee had been a soldier subject, more or less, even when highest in command, to the control of superior authority. Now, for the first time after reaching manhood, he was to become a private citizen, and to assume absolute direction of his own actions. Never during his whole career were the grander features of his character more conspicuous than in these closing years passed far from the heroic influences of the battle-field; the serene patience, sublime resignation, august dignity, ripe wisdom, and calm magnanimity that marked this last period were unsurpassed even in his own previous lofty and well-poised life. He set for his unfortunate Southern countrymen an example of unrepining submission to the inevitable, manly recognition of the practical duties confronting them in their changed circumstances, and firm hopefulness for the future, which exercised a profound influence in aiding them to pass safely through the first decade following the war, that social, political and economic Valley of the Shadow of Death.

The loyalty to his own people, state, and kindred which led him to support the South when the war began, now made him insensible to every induce-

ment to remove to a foreign land. "I look forward to better days," he wrote in September, 1865, "and trust that time and experience, the great teachers of men under the guidance of an ever-merciful God, may save us from destruction, and restore to us the bright hopes and prosperity of the past. The thought of abandoning the country and all that must be left in it is abhorrent to my feelings, and I prefer to struggle for its restoration, and share its fate rather than give up all as lost." In the same spirit, he answered an English nobleman who had in vain urged him to accept a mansion and an estate in England "commensurate with his individual merits and the greatness of an historic family." Similarly also he replied to some of his old comrades in arms who, thinking of entering Maximilian's service in Mexico, had sought his counsel. "Unless prevented by circumstance or necessity," said he to them, "it would be better for Southerners to remain at their homes and share the fate of their respective states."

Not only was he firmly resolved to stay and to share all the sorrows and afflictions of the Southern people, but he also refused to increase their distress, by becoming an applicant for office, appearing in public ceremonies, or participating in public discussions, to inflame the suspicious temper of the party now controlling the country. When urged in 1867 to allow his name to be used as a candidate for the governorship of Virginia, he declined on the ground that his consent would be perverted into a

means of fanning Northern animosities against the state, and thus make more difficult the position of those "whose prosperity and happiness were so dear to him." "If my disfranchisement and privation of civil rights would secure to the citizens of Virginia the enjoyment of civil liberty and equal rights under the Constitution, I would willingly accept them in their stead."

To General Hampton, after the close of the war, he declared that, in offering his sword to the South, he was pursuing the only course that for him would have been devoid of dishonor. "If all were to be done over again," he added, "I would act in precisely the same manner." But this clear recognition of the duty of the past hour did not for one moment blind him to the duty of the present; namely, the acceptance of the result of the armed conflict as the final settlement of the controversies that had precipitated it. "The questions which for years were in dispute between the states and general government and which unhappily were not decided by the dictates of reason, but referred to the decision of war, having been decided against us," said he, "it is the part of wisdom to acquiesce in the result and of candor to recognize the fact."

"The interests of the state," he declared on the same occasion, "are the same as those of the United States. Its prosperity will rise or fall with the welfare of the country. The duty of its citizens then appears to me to be too plain to admit of a doubt. All should unite in honest efforts to obliterate the

effects of war and restore the blessings of peace. They should remain, if possible, in the country; promote harmony and good feeling; qualify themselves to vote and elect to the state and general legislature wise and patriotic men, who will devote their abilities to the interests of the country and the healing of all dissension. I have invariably recommended this course since the cessation of hostilities, and have endeavored to practice it myself."

It was asserted at the time, and with truth, that General Lee did more to incline the scale of Southern public opinion in favor of a frank and manly acceptance of the situation than all the Federal garrisons then stationed in that section, and no one acknowledged this more candidly than his great and generous antagonist, Grant, in his report of 1864–5. It was no hollow or temporizing truce on General Lee's part, but like all the other acts of his life, was characterized by the clearest good faith and by the most unswerving honor. In order to promote an object touching so closely the safety and happiness of the Southern people, he was prepared to sacrifice even his own most sacred feelings where no question of principle was involved. Personally, General Lee was indifferent as to whether he was pardoned by the Federal Administration or not; to appear in the attitude of a suppliant to the men then in control at Washington must have been singularly painful and revolting to one who had been governed by a profound sense of duty in all his conduct and who was assured of the essential

justice of his cause. But he refused to allow the violent protest of his natural emotions to stand in the way. His petition for the benefit of the Amnesty Proclamation, from which not the slightest advantage could accrue to him personally, which in his heart he must have regarded with disdain, and which he was aware would expose him to the censure of many Southerners, was one of the noblest, most disinterested, and most unselfish acts of his life. Knowing that tens of thousands of his old soldiers, besides civilians, were compelled to apply for pardon, so as to obtain the civil rights necessary for the retrievement of their own and their states' fortunes, he thought that his own example would diminish their mortification in seeking relief from their disabilities. He had shared their dangers and glory ; he once more conquered his own spirit in order to share their humiliation.

That the Southern people have risen from the ruin that followed the war is due to the fact that they had the good sense and strength of character to learn those lessons of self-discipline, of devotion to the duties and tasks of the hour, and of confidence in the future, which General Lee inculcated to the last year of his life.

Nor was he content simply to strengthen their determination to restore their own and their states' fortunes; his whole influence was also untiringly directed toward the cultivation among them of a kindly feeling for the Northern people in spite of the exasperating policy of the then dominant party.

"True patriotism," he urged, "sometimes requires of men to act exactly contrary at one period to that which it does at another, and the motive which impels them, the desire to do right, is precisely the same. The circumstances which govern their action change, and their conduct must conform to the new order of things. History is full of illustrations of this. Washington himself is an example of this. At one time, he fought against the French, under Braddock, in the service of the King of Great Britain; at another, he fought with the French at Yorktown under the orders of the Continental Congress of America against them [the British]. He has not been branded by the world with reproach for this, but his course has been applauded."

Now, the writer of these words had special reasons for harboring rancor against the Northern people. His beautiful home at Arlington, associated with the most sacred recollections of his life, had been seized, its relics of the Lee, Custis and Washington families dispersed, and its lawns converted, as though in a spirit of calculated vindictiveness, into a soldiers' cemetery. When informed that the entire estate had been appropriated by the local authorities, on the ground that $207 of taxes had not been paid "by the owner in person," and then turned over to the possession of the War Department, General Lee quietly remarked: "I should have thought that the use of the grounds, the large amount of wood on the place, the teams and wagons, and the sale of the furniture of the house would

have been sufficient to pay the taxes." And his only comment on the transfer of the Washington relics to the National Museum was: "I hope their presence at the capital will keep in the remembrance of all Americans the principles and virtues of Washington." It was the man who had these personal deprivations to inflame his mind and harden his heart against the North, that wrote: "I have too exalted an opinion of the American people to believe that they will consent to injustice."

"All controversy," he said as early as August, 1865, "will only serve to prolong angry and bitter feeling and postpone the period when reason and charity may resume their sway." "I know of no surer way to exact the truth," he declared, "than by burying contention with the war." When General Early thought of drawing up a memoir of his own career, Lee urged him to omit "all epithets or remarks calculated to excite bitterness or animosity between different sections of the country." And in the same spirit he wrote to Mrs. Davis: "I have thought from the time of the cessation of hostilities that silence and patience on the part of the South were the true course, and I think so still. Controversy of all kinds will, in my opinion, only serve to continue excitement and passion, and will prevent the public mind from the acknowledgment and acceptance of truth. These considerations have kept me from replying to accusations made against myself, and induced me to recommend the same to

others." "All true patriots, North and South," he said later on, "will unite in advocating that policy which will soonest restore the country to tranquillity and order, and serve to perpetuate true republicanism."

A clergyman having in his presence spoken with great bitterness of the North, General Lee followed him to the door as he was leaving the room. "Doctor," said he in his most earnest tones, "there is a good old Book which I read and you preach from, which says, 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.' Do you think your remarks this evening were quite in the spirit of that teaching?" And he added, "I have fought against the people of the North because I believed they were seeking to wrest from the people of the South their dearest rights, but I have never cherished toward them bitter or vindictive feelings, and have never seen the day that I did not pray for them." And on another occasion, when several of his friends, exasperated by the unrelenting spirit which seemed to be reflected in the Reconstruction Acts, then recently passed, burst out in his hearing into a heated invective against the authors, Lee quietly took up from the table before him a copy of a Persian poet and read aloud the following lines :—

"Learn from yon Orient shell to love thy foe,
And stud with pearls the hand that brings thee woe ;
Free, like yon rock, from base vindictive pride,
Emblaze with gems the wrist that rends thy side ;

Mark where yon tree rewards the stony shower
With fruit nectarious or the balmy flower;
All nature cries aloud, shall men do less
Than love the smiter or the railer bless?"

"May not we," he asked, in putting down the book, "who profess to be governed by the principles of Christianity, rise at least to the standard of the Mohammedan poet, and learn to forgive our enemies?"

Nor was this large and tolerant spirit confined to mere words. Once, he was seen standing at his gate conversing with a man very plainly clad, who appeared highly gratified by the courtesy of his reception, and who turned away evidently delighted. "After exchanging salutations," the narrator of the story records, "General Lee said, pointing to the retreating form, 'That is one of our old soldiers, who is in necessitous circumstances.' I took it for granted that it was some veteran Confederate, when the noble-hearted chieftain quietly added, 'He fought on the other side, but we must not think of that.' I afterward ascertained (not from General Lee, for he never alluded to his charities) that he had not only spoken kindly to this old soldier, who had fought on the other side, but had sent him on his way rejoicing in a liberal contribution to his necessities."

As General Lee's private means had been dissipated by the war, and Mrs. Lee had been deprived of the Arlington estate by Federal appropriation without compensation, it became imperative for him

to adopt some calling that would assure a support for those members of his family still dependent on him. Agriculture having always had a singular charm for him, although, from his military preoccupations, he was without practical experience in it, his first inclination was to secure a small farm and devote his energies to its cultivation. "I am looking for some quiet little home in the woods," he wrote General Long, "where I can procure shelter and my daily bread, if permitted by the victor." "I want to get into some grass country," said he, "where the natural product of the land will do much for my subsistence."

Leaving Richmond, where he could enjoy no seclusion, owing to the constant attentions paid him, General Lee retired to a country house near Cartersville, in Cumberland County, placed at his disposal by a friend. Offers of assistance continued to pursue him even here; money, land, corporation stock, —all were pressed upon him in proposed return for the mere endorsement of his name in setting different enterprises on foot. But not for a moment would he consent to receive remuneration, except for services actually performed; and none of the schemes submitted to his consideration appealed to his inclinations. It was not until the presidency of Washington College at Lexington, Va., was offered him, that he showed any disposition to accept. The institution at this time possessed only a local reputation, and its financial prospects were unpromising. Its faculty consisted of but four pro-

fessors, while the number of its students did not exceed forty. Lee was, perhaps, influenced favorably to entertain the proposal that he should become its official head by its association with the name of Washington, and its remoteness from the lines of ordinary travel; doubtless, too, it was an advantage in his eyes that, in building up the institution, he would build practically from the foundation.

The obscurity and poverty of the college were not weighed by him in reaching a decision. "I soon discovered," says Bishop Wilmer, who spoke to him about the acceptance of the presidency, "that his mind towered above these earthly distinctions; that in his judgment, the cause gave dignity to the institution, and not the wealth of its endowment, or the renown of its scholars; that this door, and not another, was opened to him by Providence, and he only wished to be assured of his competency to fulfil this trust, and then make his few remaining years a comfort and blessing to his suffering country."

It was to general education that General Lee looked most hopefully for the rehabilitation of the Southern states. "I consider," he said, "the proper education of the Southern youth one of the most important objects now to be attained, and one from which the greatest benefits may be expected. Nothing will compensate us for the depression of the standard of our moral and intellectual culture, and each state should take the most energetic measures

to revive the schools and colleges, and, if possible, to increase the facilities for instruction."

He earnestly declared, in accepting the presidency of Washington College, that "it was the hope of doing something for the benefit of the young men of the South that had led him to take his present office." And after he had entered upon the performance of its duties, he refused to allow himself to be drawn away by the most seductive offers. It was proposed at one time to place him at the head of a New York firm representing Southern commerce in that city, at a salary so large that he would have been able, not only to live in comfort himself during his remaining years, but also make ample provision for his family. "I am grateful," he replied, "but I have a self-imposed task which I must accomplish. I have led the young men of the South in battle; I have seen many of them die on the field. I shall devote my remaining energies to training young men to do their duty in life."

When General Lee was first offered the presidency of the college, he unselfishly weighed the possibility of his acceptance bringing down upon the institution the hostility of the North, and, therefore, clouding its prospects of usefulness. "I think it the duty of every citizen in the present condition of the country," said he, "to do all in his power to aid in the restoration of peace and harmony, and in no way to oppose the policy of the state or general government directed to that object. It is particularly incumbent on those charged with the instruc-

tion of the young to set them an example of submission to authority, and I could not consent to be the cause of animadversion on the college." His apprehensions having been shown to be groundless, he entered upon the duties of his new office with that lofty conscientiousness, untiring energy, and firm devotion to the task of the hour which had distinguished him at every previous stage of his career. It has been justly said by one who knew him that "there was something grand in the spectacle of a man so famous in the world settling down at the head of an obscure college, in a remote country town, to perform the duties of a noble but arduous profession, without a shadow of discontent or gloom, and with nothing in his demeanor to show that he had not spent his life in the teaching and management of youth."

Throughout his presidency, he never for a moment forgot the purpose which had led him irresistibly to accept so responsible a position. That purpose, to use his own words, was "to educate Southern youth into a spirit of loyalty to the new conditions, and the transformation of the social fabric which had resulted from the war, and only through a peaceful obedience to which could the future peace and harmony of the country be restored." In one of his official reports, he referred in a tone of personal distress to the college's urgent wants, such as, for instance, the need of a larger apparatus for the laboratories, and of a more voluminous library, and then dwelt wistfully upon

what might be accomplished by a more liberal endowment, for, said he, "we must look to the rising generation for the restoration of the country."

It should always be remembered that these devoted labors, these far-sighted efforts of General Lee for the advancement of Southern education were begun and carried on by him during the darkest hour of the South's history, when her people were not only sunk in the deepest poverty by their recent losses, but were further harassed and embittered by the senseless and unnatural attempt of the Republican party to place them in the complete control of their former slaves. All these humiliating and exasperating features of their lot only caused him to consecrate himself with the greater zeal and ardor to his self-imposed task of educating Southern youth in order to hasten the arrival of those happy and prosperous days which he never ceased to anticipate with confidence.

General Lee was well-fitted for his new office by the possession, not only of high moral and intellectual qualities, but also of practical experience. For a few years, as we have seen, he had filled with distinction the somewhat similar post of superintendent of the Academy at West Point. He had acquired regular and systematic habits by long military service, while his commanding reputation and impressive presence strengthened his influence in directing and controlling so large a body of young men. From the hour he assumed charge, he sought to raise the standards in the various departments

until the institution could offer the ripest education to all who would take advantage of the facilities extended. His great name soon drew a crowd of students from all parts of the South, and as their number increased, the larger means thus afforded enabled him, with the coöperation of the faculty, to establish new chairs, to elect additional professors, and to widen the scope of the different courses of study. Finally, by his active encouragement, a complete system of schools was put in operation, and under his personal guidance and inspiration was carried on with entire harmony, and with extraordinary fruitfulness. The highest powers of the teachers for instruction, as well as of the young men for acquisition alike seemed stimulated by the consciousness of his appreciative and unremitting supervision of their efforts.

He was not satisfied to give a mere general superintendence to the college's affairs; he watched with a discerning eye, not only the progress of each class as a whole, but also the standing of its individual members. The name of every man was known to him. On one occasion, a list having been read in his presence at a faculty meeting, one name struck him immediately as being unfamiliar to his ear. He asked that it should be repeated; still he did not recognize it. "I have no recollection of a student of that name," said he in a tone of self-reproach. "It is very strange that I have forgotten him. I thought I knew every one in college. How long has he been here?" An investigation revealed

that the student had only recently arrived, and had been entered on the rolls during General Lee's temporary absence.

So unbounded was his influence over the minds of the young men, even beyond the collegiate limits, that an appeal from him, in the face of some indiscretion, which the heat and excitability of youth made them prone to commit, always had a restraining power. He would issue an address to them as a body,—"general orders" they laughingly termed it,—in which he would seek to dissuade them, by urging the submission of their conduct to the test of the highest principles; and so overwhelming was the effect of his words that no student was ever tolerated by his fellows who ventured to disregard so urgent a request from their beloved president.

During one of his campaigns, General Lee had contracted a severe sore throat, which gradually led to rheumatism of the heart sac; and by October, 1869, this had assumed the dangerous form of chronic inflammation in that part of the body. In the following spring, he was, with great difficulty, persuaded to spend some weeks in Florida and Georgia, in the hope that the change to a warmer climate would alleviate the disease. Being reluctant to increase, by his absence, the burden of work that was already borne by the other members of the faculty, he offered his resignation, which, however, the trustees declined to accept. During his journey through the South, he was received with every proof of affection and honor by all classes of citizens; but,

with characteristic modesty, he shrank from showing himself to the crowds that assembled to greet him at every available point. "Why should they care to see me?" he replied on one occasion, when urged to appear on the platform of his car. "I am only a poor old Confederate."

During his absence a large sum was appropriated by the trustees of the college for the erection of a residence for his use during his life, with remainder to Mrs. Lee; and an annuity of $3,000 was settled on him, to pass, after his death, to members of his family. On his return, he declined to accept the residence, save as the president's official home, while the annuity was refused altogether,—acts which simply recalled his course, when, during the war, he was offered a handsome house in Richmond by the municipal authorities of that city.

General Lee derived no permanent benefit from his Southern visit; nor was any improvement obtained by a sojourn at the Hot Springs of Virginia during the summer of 1870. The following September he resumed his duties at the college. One rainy and chilly afternoon of that month, he attended a meeting of Grace Church vestry, of which he was an active and zealous member. He had only his military cloak as additional clothing to protect him from the cold dampness of the room. One of the questions discussed related to an increase of the rector's salary. A deficit already due was quietly assumed by General Lee, although representing a much larger sum than could be justly expected of

him in proportion to the other members of the body. Returning home, he found that his family had been awaiting him for some time, before sitting down to tea. Approaching the table to say grace, he endeavored to articulate, but failing, silently took his seat. Removed to his bed, he lingered, with one brief rally, until October 12th, when he breathed his last.

It would be impossible to find words that would describe these closing hours more impressively than those used by Colonel William Preston Johnston, an eye-witness: "As the old hero lay in the darkened room, or with the lamp and hearth fire casting shadows upon his calm, noble front, all the massive grandeur of his form and face and brow remained, and death seemed to lose its terrors, and to borrow a grace and dignity in sublime keeping with the life that was ebbing away. His great mind sank to its last repose almost with the equal poise of health. The few broken utterances that evinced at times a wandering intellect were spoken under the influence of the remedies administered; but as long as consciousness lasted, there was evidence that all the high controlling influences still ruled; and even when stupor was laying its cold hand on the intellectual perceptions, the moral nature, with its complete orb of duties and affections, still asserted itself. A Southern poet has celebrated in song those last significant words, 'Strike the Tent,' and a thousand voices were raised to give meaning to the uncertain sound when the dying man said, with emphasis,

'Tell Hill he must come up.' These sentences serve to show most touchingly through what fields the imagination was passing; but generally his words, though few, were coherent, and for the most part, the silence was unbroken."

General Lee's remains were interred in the College Chapel at Lexington, and there now rests above his tomb a beautiful recumbent effigy of himself, the work of Valentine, one of the most distinguished sculptors of Virginia. In all parts of the South, the news of his death was received with the grief that accompanies a poignant personal loss. Nor was this feeling of sorrow confined to his own people; wherever throughout the world heroic achievement, self-sacrificing patriotism, loftiness of spirit, a majestic character, and a pure and disciplined life, were respected and admired, men paused to pay in silent thought a tribute to the memory of Robert Edward Lee.

CHAPTER XII

MILITARY GENIUS

In presenting a general estimate of Lee's greatness, it will be necessary to weigh separately his military career and his private character, although the latter in the nature of things, largely shaped the former. First, let us consider his military career. Lee combined in himself, in an extraordinary degree, the qualities of a great organizer, a great strategist, and a great tactician. It was through his unremitting energy and practical knowledge as a disciplinarian that the raw and inexperienced troops of 1861 were trained to carry out the operations culminating in the battle of First Manassas. The same capacity for organization was exhibited by him in the rapidity and thoroughness with which he reformed his army after the close of each campaign; most notably after Sharpsburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg. It was due, perhaps, to his suggestion, certainly to his approval, that the sub-divisions of that army were from the beginning made upon a principle which, by its logical simplicity, assured the highest degree of efficiency for the whole body. It was only in the artillery arm that an important change was made as the war progressed, and then simply to bring that branch more in harmony with

the spirit of the admirable system already governing the other branches of the service.

Not less conspicuous was Lee's ability as a tactician—an ability increased by his unerring insight into the idiosyncrasies of his opponent for the time being. His movements in front of the enemy were always governed more or less by his reliance upon his knowledge of these idiosyncrasies. Lee manœuvred one way in McClellan's presence; another in Pope's; yet another in Hooker's; and still another in Grant's. In Grant's presence, he would not have weakened his right in order to strengthen his left as he did on a large scale at Gaines' Mill, and on a small at Sharpsburg; nor, had he had that resolute and fearless antagonist in front of him at Second Manassas, would he perhaps have staked the fate of his army upon a great flank march; nor would he perhaps have repeated so dangerous an operation at Chancellorsville.

But never in his whole military career did he display larger tactical capacity than when opposed by Grant himself, simply because the persistent activity of that determined commander kept his antagonist in a state of continuous alertness. At the close of the battles in the Wilderness, Lee swung his troops entirely around in front of the enemy's advancing columns, and afterward, by a successful counter-movement, marked by even greater celerity, anticipated every secret attempt of the foe to concentrate at some one point to right or left. At the North Anna, he compelled Grant to withdraw his

army by a manœuvre, which, by separating its two wings, rendered their coöperation practically impossible. At Petersburg, his divination was even more unerring. Although the disparity in the enemy's favor was as four to one, and that enemy could hurry from wing to wing a large body of men without weakening the main line, Lee, by rapid concentration, was able, through a siege that lasted for nine months, to meet every attack not only on his front, but also on his flanks; and he gave way in the end only when his soldiers were too reduced in number to hold their entrenchments longer.

Nor was he content simply to repel assault, if the opposing force was not too overwhelming. During the entire war there was no finer example of the counterstroke than the one delivered by him at Second Manassas. In spite of the greater peril, this would have been repeated at Fredericksburg, had he not expected a second attack the day after the battle; and it would certainly have been repeated at the North Anna, had he not been disabled by sickness. On no field was his tactical ability more strikingly exhibited than at Sharpsburg. Whether or not, it was a mistake to have made a stand there, he, after the battle began, used his resources in troops with consummate skill; nor does he deserve the less credit for that skill because it was only Hill's opportune arrival that saved him from a great disaster on his left. His disposition of the different corps revealed that discriminating eye for topography, which he was to display to a still more

extraordinary degree in the campaign from the Wilderness to Cold Harbor.

The least commendable of all his battles, from the tactical point of view, was Gettysburg ; but this was attributable to the fact that the unexpected collision with the enemy placed him, by an accident incapable of being remedied, in the possession of ground so peculiarly shaped that it was impossible to communicate rapidly from wing to wing, and thus to move his several corps in perfect concert according to the exigencies of the moment. Moreover, the physical obstructions to harmonious coöperation were vastly increased by the practical insubordination of his chief lieutenant, whose conduct would have disorganized any plan, however otherwise easy of execution. "In the course of battle," Lee once remarked, "my direction is of more harm than use. I must then rely on my division and brigade commanders. I think and I act with all my might to bring up my troops to the right place at the right moment. After that, I have done my duty." No one was more fully aware of this fact than Longstreet, and his refusal on the second day to occupy the Round Tops while still undefended, simply because he had instructions to move his corps toward another quarter of the field, was an act of perversity that reflected no honor upon him as an officer, though conforming to general orders.

But it is as a strategist that Lee will take the highest rank in military history. From this point of view, there is reason to think he will be finally

accepted as the foremost commander produced by the war. Jackson, among Southern generals, may have surpassed him in energy and celerity, in the vigor of his strokes, and in power to enforce discipline; but in strategical conception, Lee had no superior, probably no equal among his contemporaries. "A great strategist," says Colonel Henderson, "is one who carefully calculates ways and means,—the men at his disposal; food, forage, and ammunition; the forces to be detached for political purposes; who also calculates the different factors of the problem,—strength and disposition of the enemy; roads, railways, fortresses, weather, natural features, *morale* of the opposing armies, character of the opposing general, and facilities for supply." The object of strategy is to concentrate in superior force at the decisive point, *i. e.*, the battle-field, and, at the same time, to prevent the enemy from concentrating there.

Both Lee and Jackson saw with equal clearness that the only hope of winning Southern independence lay in strategical combinations that would, on the battle-field at least, equalize the respective resources of the two opponents. It was a rule with each of these commanders never to attack against heavy odds, if, by any possible manœuvring, he could hurl his own force against a part, and that the weaker part of the enemy; in other words, each strove to compensate by extreme mobility for his numerical inferiority. Had Lee been equal in numerical strength to his antagonists, he would

never have followed the example set by McClellan and Hooker in retaining a large proportion of their respective armies in a second line for mere defense in case the first was defeated. At Sharpsburg, one-third of the Federal troops remained inactive in the rear; and at Chancellorsville, this over-cautious conduct was repeated. On both battle-fields, every Confederate soldier participated in the actual fighting.

So essentially aggressive was Lee's military genius that even in his purely defensive campaigns, he always exhibited that spirit at the first promising opportunity. Over-prudent in his tactics during the operations in West Virginia, even then he was full of daring in his strategy. It is true that he afterward opposed Johnston's bold suggestion to gather a great army at Richmond, and end the war at a stroke in the swamps of the Chickahominy by the overwhelming defeat of McClellan; but when he himself was appointed to the command, he practically adopted that suggestion before advancing on the Federal right wing at Gaines' Mill. His boldest strategical achievement during the Peninsula campaign, however, was accomplished in the use of Jackson's troops in the Valley, while he himself was still stationed at Richmond as Mr. Davis's military adviser. By thus reducing McClellan's available force one-third, he made it possible to attack a part of that force with success and drive the whole back to James River. The same far-seeing strategy that led him to order Jackson to march against

Banks at Winchester, prompted him to dispatch the same officer to Gordonsville, with the design of alarming the Federal Administration at Washington so far as to recall McClellan from Harrison's Landing; and when that end had been attained, he, for the purpose of recovering the opportunity lost at Clark Mountain, to destroy Pope's army, deliberately divided his troops in front of the enemy, marched one part of them to that enemy's rear, and united the whole again on the field of battle.

The great flank movement at Chancellorsville was a still bolder operation of the same nature, as it was carried out under his opponent's very eyes, and with a second Federal army threatening to advance in his rear at any moment. There, he not only divided his army again on the field of battle, but he left one-half of it to be exposed to the crushing impact of Hooker in front and of Sedgwick behind. The situation was even more dangerous than that at Sharpsburg, where, at the head of 39,000 men, he accepted the gage of battle from 90,000, with a deep river practically cutting him off from his only possible line of withdrawal in case of defeat.

That Lee weighed and calculated with great care all the chances even in his boldest movements is shown by his prudence and caution in remaining in position after the Federal recoil at Fredericksburg, where a reckless or impulsive general would not have resisted the temptation to strike the defeated enemy in the plain below, in spite of the fierce cannonade from the Stafford Heights, and the open road

to the pontoon bridges. The hazards of his two invasions of the North, with such a small force to preserve unbroken his lines of communication, caused him to guard almost too thoroughly, as in the capture of Harper's Ferry, for instance, against every contingency. In both he was thwarted by influences which it was impossible to anticipate: first, by the loss of the general order before Sharpsburg; and, secondly, by Longstreet's procrastination and obstinacy on the second day at Gettysburg, and by his practical disobedience of instructions on both the second and third days.

Subsequent to that battle, Lee showed even superior caution, not because the numerical disparity in his opponent's favor was greater than ever, but because there was left no officer who approached Jackson in boldness, skill, and energy in carrying out his commander's designs, or in ability to suggest designs which had not occurred to that commander. It was not simply that Lee, after Gettysburg, had Grant, the most vigorous and courageous of the Federal leaders, in his front; in the deadly struggle from the Wilderness to Cold Harbor, more than one opportunity arose, which, had he had Jackson at hand, he would have promptly used, but which he allowed to pass because, for the execution of such dangerous manœuvres, he could trust only to a lieutenant with "Stonewall's" characteristics.

If Lee possessed such extraordinary qualifications as an organizer, tactician, and strategist, why did he fail to win with his sword the independence of

the South? From Gaines' Mill to Petersburg, his career was marked by no great catastrophe. The check at Malvern Hill was a check delivered by a retreating rear-guard; the repulse at Cemetery Ridge was the repulse of 15,000 men only, after two days' success on the part of all the Confederate forces; the overthrow at Five Forks was the overthrow of one unsupported detachment cut off from the main body. There was no Missionary Ridge, no Nashville, no Waterloo in the history of the Army of Northern Virginia; no defeat, not even a repulse, of the whole body at once. Why was it then that, after inflicting on the Army of the Potomac great disasters, as at Second Manassas, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville, or after repulsing furious assaults, as at Sharpsburg, Spottsylvania, and Cold Harbor with almost unparalleled slaughter, he was unable to reduce the North to the mood of making peace?

The causes of his failure to do so were the subordination by the Confederate government of all military requirements to the supposed political necessity of holding Richmond; the enormous disparity in number of men and in quantity of material and supplies in favor of the Federal army; the lack of a highly trained corps staff, and the general prevalence of a somewhat loose discipline among the officers and troops, more particularly in the early years of the war; certain personal qualities of Lee himself; and finally, and most conspicuously, the inefficiency of the Confederate leadership in the West.

As already pointed out, the selection, for the capital, of a city situated as near the ocean highways as Richmond, was the Confederate government's first serious mistake. The next, and this was an error of even graver character, was to make the retention of that city the central policy upon which was to turn every movement of the Eastern army. Apart from all other considerations, such a policy was certain to invest its fall with fatal significance; it was practically staking the existence of the new republic upon an ability to prevent the capture of one little town of a few thousand inhabitants. Had the capital been established at some interior point, like Raleigh or Danville, where the necessary workshops and foundries could soon have been erected, or, what would probably have been wiser, at Atlanta, a city lying in a mountainous country, and remote from any natural highway to serve as a line of communication, it would have been far more difficult for the Federals to seize it, had it been defended with the valor, resolution, and constancy distinguishing the operations around Richmond. Richmond was situated upon a great stream which the Confederates could never really have hoped to close. One Federal army escaped destruction by retreat to the protection of this stream; another, by this means, was able to take a position less than twenty miles from the capital, and to hold it without the slightest apprehension as to the interruption of their communications.

As early as 1862, when Jackson was eager to lead

his victorious troops from the Valley into Maryland, he was warned to "keep always in view the probability of an attack upon Richmond from either the north, or the south, when a concentration of forces would become necessary." Had that city not been the capital before the battle of Fredericksburg, Burnside might have been drawn far from his base toward Charlottesville, where, with his line of communications exposed to severance, a retreat after defeat might have been attended with an overwhelming Federal disaster. Had Richmond not been the capital after the battles in the Wilderness, Lee could have slowly retired toward the hills south of Lynchburg, and with the advantages of that position, and with a mobile army, could, as he himself stated, have prolonged the war indefinitely.

As the head of the civil administration, it was perhaps natural that Mr. Davis should have relied too much on political influences to secure the triumph of the Confederacy. He never entirely lost the hope of foreign intervention, and he thought correctly that this hope would be at once dispelled altogether by the abandonment of the city formally adopted as the capital. A peripatetic president and cabinet would present a spectacle so devoid of dignity as to lose all foreign respect. On recalling the events of the Revolution, he remembered the aid given by France, but he forgot that, during that war, no city was made of permanent importance to the cause of the patriots, and that one after another the towns of the struggling republic, from Boston to

Savannah, fell into British possession without, in the slightest degree, affecting the final issue of the contest. From the beginning to the end of hostilities, the Confederacy had but one real ground of hope, namely, the success of its armies. Lee, and not Davis, should have enjoyed supreme power in deciding all questions of military expediency; and no political considerations should have been permitted to over-ride obvious military necessities. Lee was compelled to bear the heavy burden of military responsibility alone, and yet at no time was he in absolute control of the general movements of his own troops; in the last resort, he had to submit to the dictation of Mr. Davis and his advisers, a monstrous contradiction, apart from mere political theory, when practically upon his unhampered judgment depended the very existence of the government they represented.

Furthermore, it is necessary to consider the disparity in number of men, and in quantity of material and supplies. "It will be difficult," General Lee himself remarked after the close of the war, "to make the world believe the odds against which we fought." At Sharpsburg, the numerical superiority of the Federal army over the Confederate, was more than two to one; and at Chancellorsville, the disproportion was as great. In the battle of the Wilderness, the disparity began at more than two to one, and but for the slaughter of the Northern soldiers from that point to the end of the battles at Spottsylvania would have grown to more than three

to one after 40,000 recruits had joined Grant at the latter place.

In order successfully to resist odds apparently so overwhelming, Lee was compelled to use on these battle-fields in mere defense of his position every soldier in his ranks. No heavy reserve could be held back to invade the enemy's entrenchments with a counterstroke at the auspicious moment. "The country has yet to learn," he wrote, "how often advantages secured at the expense of many valuable lives have failed to produce their legitimate results by reason of our inability to prosecute them against the reinforcements which the superior numbers of the enemy enabled him to interpose between the defeat of an army and its ruin. More than once most promising opportunities have been lost for want of men to take advantage of them, and victory itself has been made to put on the appearance of defeat because our diminished and exhausted troops have been unable to renew a successful struggle against fresh numbers of the enemy."

And again he said when looking back upon the war: "The force which the Confederates brought to bear was so often inferior in numbers to that of the Federals that the more they followed up the victory against the position of the enemy's line, the more did they lay themselves open to being surrounded by the remainder of the enemy. It was like a man breasting a wave of the sea who, as rapidly as he clears a way before him, is enveloped by the very water he has displaced."

With her own teeming population to furnish recruits, with abundant funds to secure mercenary European troops in addition, and with tens of thousands of former slaves also to enrol, could the North have paid a more remarkable tribute to the valor, fortitude, and constancy of the decimated armies of the South than by declaring medicines contraband of war, and refusing to exchange prisoners,—acts of apparent inhumanity which she could justify only by proclaiming the supreme necessity of restoring the national authority at all costs? "I offered to General Grant," said Lee, "to send into his lines all the prisoners within my department provided he would return me man for man, and when I informed the Confederate authorities of my proposition, I was told that, if it was accepted, they would place all the prisoners at the South at my disposal. But my proposition was not accepted."

Why was it not accepted? Was it because Mr. Lincoln and General Grant were personally more indifferent to suffering than Mr. Davis and General Lee? Not so. It was not accepted because the Federal authorities had correctly concluded that the South could be subdued only by annihilation, and that the Federal government must not shrink even from such ruthless expedients to accomplish this end. Such was the principle on which Sherman's devastation of Georgia and the Carolinas, and Sheridan's of the Valley were, according to their own recorded professions, carried out. In other words, impoverished as the South now was from every

point of view, it was nevertheless declared by these two commanders, with the approval of Grant and Mr. Lincoln, that she could not be conquered until her remaining territory had been swept far cleaner of all resources than by a plague of Egyptian locusts.

The privations from which Lee's army suffered long before the March to the Sea began, necessarily diminished its efficiency to an appreciable degree. It was due as much to a lack of shoes as to sickness from the use of improper food that so large a number of the Confederate troops were unable to arrive with the main force on the field of Sharpsburg. It was due, also, to a lack of shoes that the unfortunate movement which brought on the battle of Gettysburg was made ; and it was due, too, to the want of clothing of all kinds that Lee was unable, in October, 1863, to undertake a third invasion of the North. One who stood by the roadside and watched 10,000 men under Hood pass on their way to the Rappahannock in the autumn of that year, has written : "Such rags and tags as we saw now ! Nothing was like anything else ! Most garments and arms were such as had been taken from the enemy. Such shoes as they had on ! Such tin pans and pots as were tied to their waists, with bread and bacon stuck in the ends of their bayonets." "I think the sublimest sight of the war," said General Lee, "was the cheerfulness and alacrity exhibited by this army in the pursuit of the enemy under all the trials and privations to which it was exposed."

As we have seen, the soldiers, during the campaign of Second Manassas, were forced to rely upon the orchards and corn-fields along the line of march to supplement their regular rations; and in the winter of 1863–4, it was often necessary to restrict the troops to half rations; while during that of 1864–5, they were not infrequently on the verge of actual starvation.

We must consider, too, the lack of rigid discipline in the army at large, and the absence of a highly trained corps staff. The Army of Northern Virginia, like all the other armies engaged on either side in the great conflict, was a mass of volunteers, who, unlike European soldiers, had not previously received a thorough military training. Hostilities began so suddenly and unexpectedly that there was no time to subject the troops to prolonged drilling, and an extended series of sham manœuvres. The Southern soldier had the defects of his virtues; his very independence of spirit and strength of individuality, the result of the free and active life which he had led before enrolment, only caused him to submit the more impatiently to disciplinary restraints, though ready to endure without a murmur every form of hardship and want. He did not resent the exercise of authority over his movements when his intelligence showed its reasonableness; but if not, his first disposition was to follow his own inclination, and refuse compliance.

This inborn self-assertiveness, while it increased the army's efficiency in some ways, seriously dimin-

ished it in others. It was as characteristic of the officers as of the rank and file. "The greatest difficulty I find," said General Lee on one occasion, in a tone of complaint unusual with him, "is in causing orders and regulations to be obeyed. This," he added, "arises not from a spirit of disobedience, but of ignorance." "The spirit which animates our soldiers," he said on another occasion, "and the natural courage with which they are so liberally endowed have led to a reliance on these good qualities to the neglect of measures that would increase their efficiency and contribute to their safety." It was in some degree due to this impatience under restraint that straggling became so conspicuous a feature of every Confederate march. Could the Army of Northern Virginia have been handled more like a machine, without losing the fire and resolution generated in the whole by the highly developed individuality of each soldier, it could have been used by its commander more successfully in both combination and manœuvre. Lee was forced to console himself with the thought that the superior intelligence and sturdy spirit of both officer and private were some compensation for the disinclination of both to submit to the strict discipline which alone made possible perfect unity of action.

The deficiencies of the corps staffs were also a serious obstruction to success. Many of the most accomplished officers of the Army of Northern Virginia were to be found among the members of these staffs; particularly was this so with the commander-

in-chief's, which included such men as Colonels Walter H. Taylor, Charles S. Venable, and Charles Marshall, besides others equally entitled, by their high qualifications, to special designation. But conspicuous efficiency was not general, not from lack of zeal and intelligence, which were universal, but simply from want of previous military training. Naturally, the shortcomings were more observable during the first years of the conflict than later, when the staff had been educated to a far greater degree of usefulness by the practical experience acquired in the rough school of actual war.

Perhaps, there never was a contest in which the demand for the services of such a body was more constant and urgent than during these Eastern campaigns, because the ground fought over was so covered with heavy forests, and, in some places, so overgrown with dense thickets, that, without such assistance, manœuvre and combination were alike impossible. The great disadvantages created by the physical obstructions confronting the troops at every turn could be overcome only by the prompt and accurate conveyance of orders from one wing or detachment to another. Whether this was done well or ill depended entirely upon the ability and training of the staffs charged with the performance of that vital task. Perhaps the most promising opportunity ever presented to Lee to annihilate the Army of the Potomac, was at the battle of Frazier's Farm, and yet that battle proved a failure for the Confederacy because he was able to concentrate on

the ground only 20,000 men instead of the 75,000 called for by the combination which he had so carefully planned, and which would have been entirely practicable had the corps and detachments been kept in touch by well-trained and organized staffs, such as belong to every European army. In some measure, Longstreet's delay after one o'clock, in taking position opposite the Peach Orchard, on the second day at Gettysburg was due to inefficient staff support; and other specific instances might be mentioned.

Again, the final failure of the Army of Northern Virginia was, to a certain extent, attributable to the defects of Lee's own virtues. Rather than give pain to a subordinate whose devotion to the Confederate cause was unquestionable, he would overlook grave shortcomings in that subordinate's conduct even though likely to be repeated at the next critical moment. He preferred to retain an officer in a responsible position which he was incapable of filling properly, rather than wound his pride, and tarnish his reputation by removing him. This was a weakness which Jackson never exhibited. But in Lee's defense it should be remembered that, as the commander of an army drawn from all parts of the South, it was necessary for him to exercise extraordinary tact and forbearance in order to allay the jealousies of each state, so easily aroused by any imagined slight to its representatives in that army. As unity and harmony were justly deemed by him to be all important to the Confederacy, he often en-

dured what was repugnant to his own judgment rather than, by obeying its dictates, indifferent to consequences, sow possible seed of discord and dissension.

It was not simply by his great military talents that Lee won the respect and devotion of his officers and men ; it was also by that patient and considerate spirit,—that disposition to make allowances,—which never failed him even under the most exasperating circumstances. "I agree with you," he wrote to General Hood in 1863, "in believing that our army would be invincible if it could be properly organized and officered. There were never such men in an army before. They will go anywhere and do anything if properly led. But there is the difficulty—proper commanders. Where can they be obtained? But they are improving, constantly improving. Rome was not built in a day, nor can we expect miracles in our favor."

This spirit of over-tolerance was indirectly responsible for the destruction of the Confederacy's last but most promising opportunity of winning independence. Justly believing that his lieutenants were as interested as himself in defeating the enemy, Lee always allowed them a wide latitude in the exercise of their discretion, and was ever anxious to receive and weigh their respective opinions as to the wisdom of any movement he was considering. This attitude of mind, which was undoubtedly carried too far, encouraged in one of his principal lieutenants a spirit that, on more than one occasion,

led to practical insubordination. Longstreet's conduct on the first and second days at Gettysburg was made possible only by the lenient and yielding way in which Lee had borne with his previous opinionativeness, tardiness, and perversity. Such conduct would never have been indulged in by that officer had he, during the same length of time, been serving under either Grant or Jackson; for he would have known that, should he venture upon a half-hearted support, or no support at all to the orders of those commanders, he was certain to meet with the fate of Garnett, Porter, Franklin, and Warren. General Lee evinced a sublime self-forgetfulness in assuming all the responsibility for the repulse at Gettysburg on the third day, but had he been less disposed, after similar events, to accept as his own the acts of obstinate and self-complacent subordinates, those subordinates would have been slower in giving rein to their obstructive qualities. Jackson did not always approve of his commander's decisions,—witness his opposition in the beginning to the expedition against Harper's Ferry during the Sharpsburg campaign,—but when once he was ordered to march, he performed the task assigned him with as much vigor and alacrity as if the plan had been first suggested by himself; and that is the course pursued by every true soldier and faithful lieutenant.

It seems contradictory that, although Lee tolerated in a corps commander difference of opinion stretched to the point of practical insubordination, he was, to

an extraordinary degree, subservient to the authority of Mr. Davis as the head of the Confederate Administration. Accustomed to military discipline almost from his youth, he looked upon obedience to his official superior as the cardinal principle, the very keystone, of his profession. "I am a soldier," he said to General Gordon near the close of the war, when urged to use his influence in ending a hopeless contest. "It is my province to obey the orders of the government, and to advise and counsel with the civil authorities only upon questions directly affecting this army and its defense of the capital and country." And so far did he press this attitude of non-interference that, apparently, he made no protest against Johnston's removal from the command of the forces operating north of Atlanta, although that unwise act was probably regarded by him with strong disapproval. It was entirely foreign to his nature to assume any form of responsibility that did not legitimately belong to him; and he particularly shrank from ever encroaching on a field from which the military authorities were expressly excluded by constitutional provision. It must be recalled, also, that he was peculiarly indebted to Mr. Davis, who, when his military reputation was under a cloud, in consequence of the unsuccessful campaign in western Virginia, had, by appointing him to the command of the Army of Northern Virginia, given him the opportunity to enter upon his great career.

But not one of the obstructions that had to be overcome by Lee, whether subordination of strate-

gical necessities to political considerations, disparity in number of men and in quantity of munitions and supplies, imperfect discipline among the soldiers at large, deficient training on the part of the corps staffs, or the over-leniency and generosity of the commander himself, was so influential in leading up to the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia as the Western army's failure, almost from the beginning, to maintain its ground. This was the result of incompetent leadership, as the men who fought on the Confederate side in that field, were of precisely the same quality as those who, under Lee himself, won so many victories in the East. Unfortunately for the Southern cause, the decisive battlefields were situated, not in Virginia, but in Tennessee. Appomattox was the result, not of Gettysburg, but of Missionary Ridge. With the exception of Chickamauga, a temporary triumph, and of the first day at Shiloh, which was reversed by the second, the Western army's career was marked only by disasters. From the fall of Fort Donelson on to the evacuation of Atlanta, the superior resources of its Federal antagonist told to a degree never observed in Virginia until after the abandonment of the lines of Petersburg.

The victory of Missionary Ridge rendered it safe for Grant to transfer a large body of troops to the East in order to strengthen the Army of the Potomac; while the capture of Atlanta made it possible for Sherman to march through Georgia and the Carolinas and destroy the last remaining granary of the Con-

federacy. These two separate movements brought to bear on the Army of Northern Virginia two powerful destructive forces, which, taken together, proved irresistible. Had Jackson survived Chancellorsville and been placed in command of the Western army, the victory of Chickamauga would most probably have been pressed so energetically that no Missionary Ridge would have followed; no reinforcements would have been sent from the West to the Army of the Potomac; and Sherman would have been too much engaged in holding his position in Tennessee to descend upon Atlanta through the hills of north Georgia. Grant, the ablest, most vigorous, and most determined of the Federal commanders, would have been detained in the vicinity of Chattanooga, and Lee would have been left to oppose Meade, until that officer, defeated in his turn, should be succeeded by one who perhaps possessed still less boldness, energy, and native talent.

Looking back upon the history of the war from the Confederate point of view, it now seems clear that, after the battle of Missionary Ridge, the Southern aim should have been, not independence, but the acquisition of the most liberal terms for readmission to the Union. The psychological moment occurred when Grant recoiled from Lee's entrenchments at Cold Harbor. Had the ripest practical statesmanship then prevailed in Confederate cabinet and Congress, causing a dispassionate scrutiny of the ultimate chances of failure, the indirect overtures which Mr. Lincoln made in the hour of his

own and the North's profound depression would have been accepted, the Southern people would have returned with full compensation for their slaves, to be expended in restoring their wasted resources; with the brilliant prestige of their long and heroic struggle for independence to raise their political influence to the highest point in our national history; and with complete power to fix the emancipated negro's status in harmony with the dictates of their own experienced judgment. The era of Reconstruction, with its shameful and embittered memories, would never have intervened, and all the dangerous precedents established in the hour of uncontrolled passion would have been rendered forever nugatory by their practical revocation.

There is no evidence that General Lee favored the acceptance of the Federal advances, but when we study the history of his life after the close of the war, the conclusion seems irresistible that, had he been free at that time to show the practical wisdom, the conciliatory spirit, and the perfect foresight which he evinced when the country had been reunited by ruthless force alone, the South would stand indebted to him for the most beneficent act of statesmanship that could ever have been recorded in her history, and his name would be equally dear to the Northern and Southern people for closing the gaping wounds of a common country, with honor to all the states, and with humiliation to none.

CHAPTER XIII

GENERAL CHARACTER

THE very qualities that diminished General Lee's ability to perform the part of a successful revolutionary leader were such as to adorn his character in private life. Profound religious feeling was the foundation of that character; it gave its complexion to all his thoughts, and, consciously or unconsciously, governed all his actions, whether trivial or important. If Southern independence was to be won only by violating Christian principles or the dictates of humanity, he would never have consented to become the Confederacy's military instrument in bringing it about, however ardently he might have desired its attainment. No such cynical sentiment as "omelettes cannot be made without breaking eggs" could ever have been uttered or approved by him. Never during his invasions of hostile territory would he have inaugurated or countenanced a course of devastation involving the innocent and helpless, even had he thought that such a course would perhaps cripple the enemy beyond recovery. Not even the suggestions of a just and natural resentment provoked him to reprisals, because the indulgence of such a feeling would have imparted to the war a spirit of wanton cruelty and savagery

which he abhorred. The burning of Chambersburg by General Early, in retaliation for General Hunter's use of the torch in the Valley (that city, knowing the alternative, having declined to pay the money tribute levied on her in consequence of those barbarities) was done without General Lee's knowledge, authority, or approval. As we have seen, he positively refused, during the retreat from Petersburg, to disperse his army in guerilla warfare, because, however effective this might be toward securing more favorable terms in the final pacification, it would lead to courses radically repugnant to the Christian and humane principles which he was determined to uphold to the last ditch.

Indeed, his religious feeling seemed only to be intensified by the Confederacy's declining fortunes. The profound impression made upon him by the Gettysburg campaign, and his less hopeful outlook on the future thereafter, are clearly revealed in the deeper and more fervent religious tone of his correspondence from that date to the end of the contest. He seemed to lean more on Providence the more Providence appeared to be deserting his cause. When the Confederacy finally sank in ruins, it was this unshaken trust in God, this confidence in Divine wisdom, that inspired him with calm resignation to the inevitable as well as with a sanguine expectation of a happier day for the Southern people. So deep was this trust and so firm this confidence that not even the relentless Acts of Reconstruction aroused in him bitterness or animosity

toward the North. That era of submersion was to him but a passing wave of darkness; the light from Heaven would be obscured only for a time.

It was natural that a man guided in his entire conduct by religious principles should, at all costs, and in spite of every temptation, have been loyal to his conception of duty from the beginning to the end of his life. The boy, who, with a gravity beyond his years, devoted every moment not engaged in study, to brightening the hours of an invalid mother, was the father of the man, who, putting aside all proffers of Federal honors, and disregarding the loss of home and estate, obeyed the call of his native commonwealth, defended her soil up to the exhaustion of his last resource, and then used his influence to promote peace and harmony and to spread abroad a hopeful spirit. "I never in my life saw in General Lee the slightest tendency to self-seeking," said Mr. Davis. "It was not his to make a record; it was not his to shift the blame to other shoulders, but it was his, with an eye fixed upon the welfare of his country, never faltering, to follow the line of duty to the end." And Mr. Stephens has recorded: "What I had seen General Lee to be at first, childlike in simplicity, and unselfish in his character, he remained unspoiled by praise and success."

Indeed, no feeling of personal ambition seemed at any time to animate him. When, in the spring of 1861, the Confederate seat of government was removed to Richmond, he lost his position as su-

preme commander of the Virginia troops, a reduction which the Confederate authorities at first greatly feared would diminish his zeal for the cause. When sounded by Mr. Stephens, he simply replied: "I am willing to serve anywhere where I can be useful." Before his appointment to the leadership of the Army of Northern Virginia, in succession to Johnston, he occupied the least conspicuous post filled by any Confederate officer of equal rank. His military reputation had been seriously lowered by the campaign in western Virginia, and not advanced by his achievements as an engineer along the south Atlantic coast because unknown to the general public; and yet at no time, in word or action, did he give any sign of dissatisfaction or discontent.

Undepressed by events that clouded his private fortunes, he was never elated by events that covered those fortunes with a dazzling radiance. In either situation, he displayed equal greatness of mind and soul. Which was the sublimer moral act, to attribute, in the intoxicating hour of success at Chancellorsville, all the glory of the victory to Jackson, or in the depressing hour of failure at Gettysburg, to assume all the responsibility for the repulse, which really belonged to Longstreet? This spirit of generosity was shown just as conspicuously in his relations with less distinguished subordinates; the officers of inferior rank who rose to prominence under him were always certain to receive more rather than less credit than was their due for their services to the Confederate cause.

Another phase of the same spirit was exhibited in his attitude toward the enemy: he was never heard to express himself with rancor regarding the North even during the progress of the war. He always spoke of the opposing army as "those people." This spirit of moderation toward his foes was illustrated with singular beauty in an incident that occurred at Gettysburg, after the close of the battle. "I was badly wounded," says a private of the Army of the Potomac. "A ball had shattered my left leg. I lay on the ground not far from Cemetery Ridge, and as General Lee ordered his retreat, he and his officers rode near me. As he came along I recognized him, and though faint from exposure and loss of blood, I raised up my hands, looked Lee in the face, and shouted as loud as I could, 'Hurrah for the Union.' The general heard me, looked, stopped his horse, dismounted, and came toward me. I confess I at first thought he meant to kill me. But as he came up, he looked down at me with such a sad expression on his face, that all fear left me, and I wondered what he was about. He extended his hand to me and grasping mine firmly and looking right into my eyes, said, 'My son, I hope you will soon be well.' If I live a thousand years, I will never forget the expression on General Lee's face. Here he was defeated, retiring from a field that cost him and his cause almost their last hope, and yet he stopped to say words like those to a wounded soldier of the opposition, who had taunted him as he passed by." As soon as the

general had left me, I cried myself to sleep there upon the bloody ground."

There have been few Americans who have had as much reason as General Lee to indulge a spirit of pride. Possessed of an ancestry illustrious for their achievements in both peace and war; able to look back upon a career of his own unsurpassed, perhaps unequaled, in the military history of the English-speaking race; connected by descent and marriage with the family of the New World's greatest hero; distinguished throughout life by his manly beauty, imposing presence, and courtly manners; and enjoying the worldly advantages of the highest social position, popular respect and admiration, as well as a sufficiency of personal estate even after the loss of his beautiful home,—would it have been surprising had this man, endowed with all these things to stimulate his egotism, shown in one form or another, some conspicuous evidence of self-esteem? Simple, modest, and humble-minded he began; simple, modest, and humble-minded he ended, an unbroken record of the most perfect consistency.

Though decisive in character, and of passions far from weak, it was rare indeed, that he lost control of himself, and then, as a rule, only when provoked by some glaring instance of moral delinquency. Such an instance occurred in the course of his first invasion of the North. A stringent proclamation prohibiting pillage had been issued. Coming suddenly upon a half-starved soldier, who was sneaking off with a squealing pig under his arm, Lee be-

came greatly incensed at so palpable a proof of disobedience to his commands, and having directed the arrest of the man upon the spot, had him sent under guard to Jackson's corps, to which he belonged, with an order for his immediate execution. Jackson, thinking that the Confederate army was already small enough, placed the unlucky culprit in the front rank at Sharpsburg, where he bore himself with such gallantry that he was afterward pardoned.

Lee was remarkable for an unblemished purity in his conversation as well as in his conduct. One associated with him continuously from boyhood to old age has recorded that, throughout that long intercourse, filled as it was with the most intimate and unguarded moments, he had never heard one word issue from Lee's lips which might not have been spoken in the presence of the most modest and refined woman. "His correctness of demeanor and language," says Joseph E. Johnston, a man, who, from his own elevated character, was fully capable of judging his great contemporary, "and attention to all duties, personal and official, and a dignity as much a part of himself as the elegance of his person, gave him a superiority which everybody acknowledged in his heart."

"I saw strong evidence of the sympathy of General Lee's heart after the first engagement of our troops in the Valley of Mexico," remarks the same distinguished commander. "I had lost a cherished young relative in that action known to

him only as my relative. Meeting me, he suddenly saw in my face the effect of that loss, burst into tears, and expressed his deep sympathy as tenderly in words as his lovely wife would have done." Nor did this power of entering into the feelings of others stop at men. From youth upward, he had been particularly fond of horses and dogs. Many of the most interesting anecdotes of his early life relate to the self-sacrificing pains which he took to promote the welfare of his children's numerous pets. His celebrated horse, Traveler, which bore him through so many of his campaigns, was always treated by him with as much care and affection as if he were a member of the family. "Traveler is my only companion, I may also say, pleasure," he wrote to his daughter from Lexington, during a vacation when he happened to be alone. "He and I, whenever practicable, wander out in the mountains and enjoy sweet confidence."

All suffering animals that came under his notice never failed to appeal to his acute sense of compassion. This feeling on his part was beautifully illustrated in a scene which occurred in the lines below Richmond during the siege of Petersburg. "He was visiting a battery," says a member of his staff, who has related the anecdote, "and the soldiers, inspired by their affection for him, gathered near him in a group that attracted the enemy's fire. Turning toward them, he said, in his quiet manner: 'Men, you had better go farther to the rear; they are firing up here, and you are exposing your-

selves to unnecessary danger.' The men drew back, but General Lee, as if unconscious of danger to himself, walking forward, picked up some small object on the ground, and placed it on the limb of a tree above his head. It was afterward perceived that the object for which he had thus risked his life was an unfledged sparrow that had fallen from its nest. It was a marked instance of that love for the lower animals and deep feeling for the helpless which he always displayed."

It was but natural that a man whose heart was such a well-spring of kindness, tenderness and sympathy, should have won, to an extraordinary degree, the respectful love of his social inferiors, whether his own servants or not, who were frequently in his presence. It is related that, in early life, he accompanied one of his mother's slaves to the far South in the hope that the change to a warmer and dryer climate would cure or alleviate the pulmonary disease from which he was suffering. During the darkest hours of the Reconstruction era, when the animosities between the whites and blacks were so much inflamed, the negroes, of their own spontaneous accord, were always eager, on every occasion, to manifest their profound reverence for his person. "When he approached, either walking or mounted," we are told, "they would stop, bow politely, and stand until he had passed. He never failed to acknowledge their salutes with kind and dignified courtesy."

Of his devotion and thoughtful consideration for

the members of his family, the beautiful record recently given to the world by his youngest son furnishes innumerable examples. "To my mother, who was a great invalid from rheumatism for more than ten years," writes Captain Lee, "he was the most faithful attendant and tender nurse. Every want of hers that he could supply, he anticipated, and whenever he was in the room, the privilege of pushing her wheeled chair into the dining room or out on the verandas, or elsewhere about the house, was yielded to him. He sat with her daily, entertaining her with accounts of what was doing in the college, and the news of the village, and would often read to her in the evening. For her, his love and care never ceased, his gentleness and patience never ended." And what was true of his relations with his wife was equally true of his relations with his children. His family life was rich in all that the heart affords, full of tender yet discriminating indulgence, and marked by an unceasing enjoyment of the pure and simple round of domestic pleasures and amusements. In his own home, he was the embodiment of hospitality, his manner always charmingly affable, his conversation often quietly humorous, and at all times interesting and unaffected. No one would have recognized in the man as he appeared under his own roof, the cold and austere leader who had so recently directed the movements in great battles.

In intercourse with strangers, General Lee's natural dignity was such that he could repel or at-

tract as seemed to him proper. To them, he often appeared reserved and silent, but no one who approached him without presumption could justly impute to him a want of kindness and consideration. "I shall never forget his sweet winning smile," says Lord Wolseley, who was introduced to him in camp only a short time after the battle of Sharpsburg, "nor his clear honest eyes that seemed to look into your heart whilst they searched your brain. I have met many of the great men of my time, but Lee alone impressed me with the feeling that I was in the presence of a man who was cast in a grander mould and made of different and finer metal than all other men. He is stamped upon my memory as a being apart and superior to all others in every way,—a man with whom none I ever knew and very few of whom I have read was worthy to be classed. I have met but two men who realized my ideas of what a true hero should be,—my friend, Charles Gordon, was one; General Lee, the other." "Forty years have come and gone since our meeting," the same distinguished soldier remarks in his recently published autobiography, "yet the majesty of his manly bearing, the genial, winning grace, the sweetness of his smiles, and the impressive dignity of his old-fashioned style of address come back to me amongst the most cherished of my recollections. His greatness made me humble, and I never felt my own individual insignificance more keenly than I did in his presence."

No impartial mind can dwell upon General Lee's

character without recalling Washington's; nor is the similarity to be wondered at, for being natives of the same county and state, the dispositions of both men had been shaped by the influences of the same physical surroundings, the same social life, and the same general ancestry. Each was the consummate flower of all that was most elevated in slave institutions. Earnest, sedate, and studious even in boyhood, both had assumed the duties of manhood when others of their own age were still in a state of dependence. A commanding presence, and an equally commanding personal dignity, were common to both almost from their youth down to their last hours. Both were remarkable for a combination of moral and intellectual qualities so evenly balanced and so exquisitely proportioned that no one quality over-shadowed or dwarfed another. Equally characteristic of both were their perfect integrity and probity in every relation and in every situation of their lives. Both were endowed with that supreme gift of mind and soul, which raises up one man among ten millions to be a historical leader of men. Lee possessed the greater military genius, but it was Lee, not Washington, who was ultimately unsuccessful; strangely alike in their characters and in their careers, they were strangely unlike in their final destinies.

But in spite of his failure to establish their nationality with his sword, and in spite, also, of their own reconciliation with the new order, the memory of Lee remains second only to Washing-

ton's in the affection, honor, and veneration of the Southern people. This is not merely because he sacrificed home, estate, and the prospect of the most dazzling honors to come to their assistance in their most critical hour; nor because he is forever associated with their proudest recollections of the most heroic period in their history; nor because in character and conduct he was a model of all that was lofty, upright, and manly. They love and revere his memory also because the whole spirit of his public and private life (which appears only the more admirable the more carefully it is scrutinized), refutes the indiscriminate aspersions cast upon their social system during the existence of slavery, and vindicates them from the charge that, in the struggle for what they deemed their right of local self-government, they were animated merely by a desire to perpetuate an institution repugnant to the growing humanity of the age.

General Lee's part in the war was such as to endear his memory to the Southern people alone, but the advice which he gave and the personal example which he set after Appomattox should confine property in his fame to no one division of the Union. The moderation, foresight, and wisdom displayed by him after the close of hostilities swells his figure to the proportions of a hero common to North and South alike. It was Mr. Lincoln's lamentable fate to be cut off by the assassin before he could fully develop this character; nor is it by any means certain whether, with all his tact, sagacity and patri-

otism, he could have offered any successful resistance to the policy of that sinister group of men who were responsible for the passage of the Acts of Reconstruction. It was General Lee's happier lot, on the other hand, to perform a work in reconciling the Southern people to the new conditions confronting them, which, as time goes on, is seen to have had indirectly as deep a significance and influence from a national as from a local point of view. Harmony, repression of rancor, recognition of a common destiny, in short, nationality, was the burden of his counsels even when the South was passing through the exasperating period of Reconstruction. He looked beyond the dismal present to the contented and prosperous future, and was the prophet as well as the leader of his people.

During the time that General Lee was playing this great rôle of reconciler, there was not another man of the first order of distinction, either in the North or the South, who had risen to the same level of patriotism. He anticipated by many years the spirit which has at last produced national peace, concert and unity. His words urging conciliation, forbearance, and oblivion of the surviving hatreds of the past, and his example of a life quietly devoted to the duties of the present hour, were as a guiding light set upon a hill for all men to see and follow. And that light will continue to burn against the background of our national history, because, if for no other reason, it will never cease to lift up and strengthen the minds and hearts of the South-

ern people, who, under the Providence of God, are destined, with the growth of their states in wealth and population, to be restored to that commanding position in the Union of their fathers which they occupied before the great war.

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INDEX

ABOLITION, 70, 73, 74, 79, 87.
Acquia Creek, 157, 192–193, 206.
Alabama, 101.
Aldie's Gap, 160, 171.
Alexandria, 27, 169.
Amelia Court-House, 305.
Anderson, General, 119, 210, 230, 243, 245, 248.
Apaches, 59.
Appomattox Court-House, 306.
Arkansas, 82, 98, 174.
Arlington, 28, 32–34, 39, 61–63, 84–86, 316.
Armistead, General L. A., 247.
Ashland, 139.
Atlanta, 108, 339.

BALTIMORE, 57, 181, 222, 227, 235, 239, 244.
Banks, General N. P., 128, 131–133, 151, 155.
Banks's Ford, 204, 215.
Barksdale, General, 196.
Beauregard, General P. G. T., 111–112, 114–116, 224, 285, 287.
Bermuda Hundred, 285.
Blair, F. P., 86, 89.
Boonesboro, 179, 182.
Bowling Green, 211.
Bragg, General Braxton, 182.
Branch, General, 142.
Brandy Station, 224.
Bristoe Station, 162.
Brown, John, 40, 62, 63, 76–77, 82.
Bull Run, battle of, see First Manassas; mountains, 159, 160, 162, 224.
Burnside, General A. E., 55; at Sharpsburg, 185; succeeds McClellan, 191; at battle of Fredericksburg, 195 *et seq.*; superseded, 202; part in battle of the Wilderness, 264, 266.
Butler, General B. F., 285.

CALVERT, Eleanor, 32.
Cameron, Simon, 89.
Carlisle, 225, 227.
Carricksford, 116.
Carter family, 24, 25.
Carter, Ann Hill, 24, 35.
Carter, Robert, 24.
Cashtown, 227–228.
Cedar Mountain, battle of, 156.
Centreville, 113, 163, 169, 224.
Cerro Gordo, battle of, 46–48.
Chambersburg, 225, 356.
Chancellorsville, town, 205, 208, 210–212, 215–216, 262–263; battle of, see Chapter VII.
Chantilly, 257; battle of, 169.
Chapultepec, 53–54.
Charleston, 125–126, 129.
Cheat Mountain, 118, 121–123.
Chickahominy River, 131, 134–146.
Churubusco, 52.

City Point, 296.
Clark Mountain, 157.
Comanche Indians, 59.
Confederacy, disadvantages to overcome, 97 *et seq.*; advantages possessed by, 102; its line of coast defense, 126; highest point of its fortunes, 218.
Contreras, 50, 52.
Coosawhatchie, 126.
Coyoncan, 53.
Crampton Gap, 179.
Culpeper Court House, 155–156, 189, 223, 257–258.
Cumberland Island, 22; Valley, 224, 227.
Custis, G. W. P., 32–33, 56, 61, 85.
Custis, Mary, see Lee.
Custis, Nellie, 37.

DALTON, 258.
Danville, 284, 295, 305, 339.
Davis, Jefferson, 58, 78; appoints military officers at beginning of the war, 107; names Lee as military adviser, 110–111; opposes invasion of the North, 114; appoints Lee to chief command in western Virginia, 117; insists upon defense of Richmond, 131; appoints Lee commander of Army of Northern Virginia, 137; disapproves of stand on North Anna River, 194; anticipates foreign intervention after battle of Fredericksburg, 202; sanguine of peace after Chancellorsville, 221; refuses to form second army before battle of Gettysburg, 224; declines to accept Lee's resignation, 256; his policy of defending Richmond criticised, 283–284; relies too much on political influence, 340.
Dinwiddie Court-House, 303.
Drewry's Bluff, 134, 138.
"Dungeness," 23.

EARLY, GENERAL JUBAL A., 206–207, 215, 232, 243, 281–282, 292, 294, 317, 356.
Emerson, R. W., 75.
Erlington Heights, 150.
Ewell, General R. S., 132, 145–146, 222–223, 227, 229–230, 232, 233, 237, 239, 241, 243, 245–246, 264.

FAIR OAKS, battle of, 135–136; see battle of Seven Pines.
Falmouth, 195, 205.
Farmville, 305.
Floyd, General John B., 116, 121.
Forts, Hamilton, 41; Harrison, 297; Monroe, 40, 111, 141, 144–145, 151–152.
Franklin, General W. B., 147, 169, 180, 196–199, 254.
Frazier's Farm, battle of, 148.
Fredericksburg, town, 131, 192–196, 202–205, 207, 223, 263; battle of, 195–201, 221.
Fredericktown, 176–177.
Freemantle, Colonel, 226.
Frémont, General J. C., 128, 131–132, 151, 155.
Fugitive Slave Law, 78.

GAINESVILLE, 159, 162.

Garnett, General R. S., 111, 115.
Garrison, William Lloyd, 70, 73, 75.
Georgia, 101, 114, 124, 139.
Gettysburg, town, 227–229, 231, 237; for battle, see Chapter VIII.
Gibbon, General, 198.
Gordon, General John B., 270–271, 302.
Gordonsville, 155–156, 189, 203, 211, 259.
Grant, General U. S., 55, 108; appointed commander-in-chief, 258; career in West, 259; plan of Wilderness campaign, 260–261; crosses Rapidan, 262–263; checked in the Wilderness, 265–266; attacks at Spottsylvania Court-House, 268–272; at North Anna River, 273; crosses the James River, 286; plans before Petersburg, 288; sends troops from Petersburg to Washington, 292; explodes mine, 293–294; concentrates troops at Five Forks, 303; forces Lee to abandon Petersburg, 304; receives Lee's surrender, 308; report on condition of South, 1865, 314.
Greene, General Nathanael, 21, 23.

Hagerstown, 176, 179, 183.
Halliwell, Mr., 36, 37.
Hampton, General Wade, 288, 291. 313.
Hancock, General W. S., 229–230, 264–266, 296–298.
Harper's Ferry, 62–63, 110–111, 116, 174, 176–178, 180, 182, 224, 249.
Harrisburg, 222, 227.
Harrison's Landing, 135, 145, 150–151, 173.
Hayne, R. Y., 69.
Heintzelman, General, 135–136, 147.
Heth, General H., 228.
Higginson, T. W., 77.
Hill, General A. P., at battle of Mechanicsville, 139–142; at battle of Frazier's Farm, 148; at Harper's Ferry, 182; at battle of Sharpsburg, 185; wounded at Chancellorsville, 213–214; part in Gettysburg campaign, 222–223, 228, 230, 233, 240, 242–243, 245; part in Wilderness campaign, 264–265; opposes Federal advance at Petersburg, 291; defeats Warren, 297.
Hill, General D. H., 135, 140, 144, 146–148, 167, 178–179.
Holmes, General, 111, 148.
Hood, General John B., 245, 248, 295, 300, 344.
Hooker, General Joseph, 55; advance at battle of Sharpsburg, 184; appointed commander of Army of Potomac, 202; concentrates at Chancellorsville, 203–204; right wing driven in, 212; fortifies his second line, 214; retreats across Rappahannock, 216; moves northward after Chancellorsville, 224; crosses the Potomac, 226; superseded, 227.
Howard, General O. O., 211–212.

Howe, S. G., 77.
Huger, General, 111, 135, 147–148.
Humphreys, General A. A., 242, 305.
Hunter, General, 282, 288.

INDIANS, 58–61.

JACKSON, ANDREW, 37.
Jackson, General H. R., 116, 119.
Jackson, General Thomas J., advocates destructive policy, 105; opposes evacuation of Harper's Ferry, 116; operations in Shenandoah Valley, 132–133; outflanks Porter on the Chickahominy, 139–144; at White Oak Swamp, 146–148; at Malvern Hill, 149; defeats Banks at Cedar Mountain, 156; marches to Pope's rear, 160–163; at second battle of Manassas, 163–169; expedition against Harper's Ferry, 177 *et seq.*; part in battle of Sharpsburg, 182–185; stationed in the Valley, 190; part in battle of Fredericksburg, 195–199; advances to Chancellorsville, 206–207; flank march, 209 *et seq.*; wounded, 213; death, 219–220; characteristics, 233, 252, 334, 347.
James River, 98, 134, 143, 145–148, 151, 266, 289.
Janney, John, 95.
Jefferson, Thomas, 19, 82.
Johnson, Reverdy, 54.
Johnston, General A. S., 58, 61.
Johnston, General Edward, 132, 241, 269, 271.
Johnston, General Joseph E., 58, 111, 116; at first battle of Manassas, 112–114; retreats behind the line of the Rappahannock, 129; retreats up the Peninsula, 134; attacks McClellan on the Chickahominy River, 135; wounded, 136; in command at Dalton, 258; his removal, 283.
Johnston, William Preston, 328.

KEARNEY, GENERAL, 42, 52.
Kentucky, 73, 182.
Keyes, General, 135.

LAFAYETTE, MARQUIS DE, 21.
Law, General, 238.
Lee, Ann Carter, see Carter.
Lee, Arthur, 17.
Lee, Charles, 24.
Lee, Fitzhugh, 209, 211, 292.
Lee, Francis Lightfoot, 17, 27.
Lee, G. W. Custis, 92.
Lee, Henry, 18, 20 *et seq.*
Lee, Mary Custis, 32, 39, 85, 90.
Lee, Matilda, 18.
Lee, Philip, 17.
Lee, Richard, Sr., 15, 16.
Lee, Richard, Jr., 16.
Lee, Richard Henry, 17, 19, 27.
Lee, Robert E., Jr., 105, 364.
Lee, Smith, 45.
Lee, Stephen D., 186.
Lee, Thomas, 17, 18.
Lee, William H. F., 30, 291, 303.
Lee, General Robert E., ancestors, 15 *et seq.*; early in-

fluences in life of, 28, 30–31; boyhood, 35, 36; at West Point, 37–38; marriage, 39; at Fortress Monroe, 40; with General Wool in Mexico, 42–43; at Vera Cruz, 44–45; at Cerro Gordo, 46–48; explores the Pedrigal, 49–52; part in operations at Contreras, Churubusco and Chapultepec, 52–54; superintendent of West Point Military Academy, 58; stationed in Texas, 59–60; captures John Brown at Harper's Ferry, 62; motives in joining the Confederacy, 84 *et seq.*; appointed commander of Virginia troops, 95; organizes Confederate troops, 109; campaign in western Virginia, 118 *et seq.*; in charge of Southern coast defenses, 124–126; takes command of Army of Northern Virginia, 137; attacks McClellan's right wing, 138–144; checked at Malvern Hill, 149; attacks Pope at Second Manassas, 164–166; successfully resists McClellan's assaults at Sharpsburg, 181 *et seq*; favors opposing Burnside at North Anna River, 192–194; battle of Fredericksburg, 195–201; battle of Chancellorsville, 205–216; advances into Pennsylvania, 222; proclamation at Chambersburg, 225; concentrates at Cashtown, 227; reasons for opposing flank march at Gettysburg, 234–235; retreats into Virginia, 249; offers his resignation, 255; takes position on the Rapidan, 257; attacks Grant in the Wilderness, 263; opposes Federals at Spottsylvania Court-House, 268–272; on the North Anna River, 273; his attitude toward holding Richmond after Cold Harbor, 280 *et seq.*; defense of Petersburg, 287 *et seq.*; difficulties to be overcome, 299 *et seq.*; appointed commander-in-chief, 302; abandons Petersburg, 304; retreats to Appomattox, 305 *et seq.*; surrenders, 306 *et seq.*; discourages emigration of Southerners after war, 312 *et seq.*; condemns sectional bitterness, 316; becomes president of Washington College, 320; health declines, 326; death, 328.

Letcher, Governor John, 94, 109.

Lincoln, Abraham, 79, 89, 90; objects to McDowell joining McClellan, 130; policy of protecting Washington, 131–132; orders Pope to advance toward Culpeper, 155; issues Emancipation Proclamation, 187; urges McClellan, after battle of Sharpsburg, to pursue Lee, 189; relations with McClellan, 191; dissatisfied with Meade, 255; influences ensuring his reëlection, 283; death, before he could become a peacemaker, 367.

Longfellow, H. W., 75.

Longstreet, General James, at battle of Seven Pines, 135–136; operations before battle of Gaines' Mill, 140–143; at battle of Frazier's Farm, 146–148; at Thoroughfare Gap, 164; part in battle of Second Manassas, 165–169; opposes expedition against Harper's Ferry, 177; at South Mountain, 179; part in battle of Sharpsburg, 181–185; of Fredericksburg, 195–199; expedition against Suffolk, 202; starts upon Gettysburg campaign, 222–223; slowness in second day's battle, 232–233; favors flank march, 234–235; at the Peach Orchard, 241; part in third day's battle, 245–248; campaign in Tennessee, 259; part in battle of the Wilderness, 265–266; characteristics, 166, 218, 223, 350.
Loring, General, 116.
Louisiana, 174.
Lowell, J. R., 75.
Lynchburg, 295.

MADISON, JAMES, 26, 82.
Magruder, General John B., 50, 111, 140, 146–148.
Mahone, General William, 291, 294, 296.
Malvern Hill, battle of, 147, 149.
Manassas, town, 160–163, 224; battle of First, 110–112; battle of Second, 165–168.
Mansfield, General, 184.
Marshall, John, 19, 83.
Marshall, Colonel Charles, 219, 301, 347.
Martinsburg, 174.
Marye's Heights, 195, 198, 206, 215.
Maryland, 26, 67, 73, 82, 113, 174, 176, 182, 202.
Matamoras, 41.
McClellan, General George B., 55, 89, 113–114, 116, 118, 128; plan of invasion of the South, 129–130; concentrates on the Chickahominy, 134; battle of Gaines' Mill, 141–144; retreats to the James River, 145; battle of Malvern Hill, 150; withdraws from the Peninsula, 156; reinstated in command of all the Federal forces in the East, 173; advances to South Mountain, 180; battle of Sharpsburg, 182 *et seq.*; concentrates at Warrenton, 190; superseded, 191.
McDowell, General Irwin, 111, 131–134, 139, 151, 155.
McLaws, General L., 167, 210, 215, 245, 248.
Meade, General George G., 55; part in battle of Fredericksburg, 197–198; appointed commander of Army of Potomac, 227; decides to concentrate at Gettysburg, 230–231; advantages of his position, 235, 239, 240; follows Lee, 249; offers his resignation, 256; at Mine Run, 257.
Mechanicsville, battle of, 142.
Mexico, City of, 46–48, 56.
Miles, General Nelson A., 113.
Missionary Ridge, battle of, 258–259, 352 *et seq.*

Mississippi River, 40, 99, 126.
Missouri, 73.
Molino del Rey, battle of, 53.
Monroe, James, 26.
Mount Vernon, 32.

NASHVILLE, battle of, 300.
Newberne, 202.
New England, 66–67, 74.
New Orleans, 129.
New York State, 65.
North Anna River, 192, 206, 273.
North Carolina, 73, 82, 114, 124, 139, 258.

ORANGE COURT-HOUSE, 259, 263.

PAMUNKEY RIVER, 139.
Parker, Theodore, 77.
Parkersburg, 116.
Patterson, General, 113.
Peace Conference, 82.
Pedrigal, 49–51.
Pelham, Captain, 198.
Pender, General, 229, 243, 248.
Pendleton, General W. N., 222, 233.
Petersburg, 102, 267, 286 *et seq.*
Pettigrew, General J. J., 228, 245, 247–248.
Philadelphia, 181, 222, 227.
Pickett, General George E., 243, 245, 247–248, 251, 303 *et seq.*
Pierce, Franklin, 52–53.
Pillow, General, 50–51.
Pipe Creek, 227–228, 230–231, 236.
Pocotaligo, 126.
Pope, General John, 55; takes command at Culpeper, 155–157; falls back to the Rappahannock River, 158; moves against "Stonewall" Jackson, 162–163; attacks Jackson at Manassas, 164; defeated, 165.
Port Royal, 125.
Porter, General Fitz-John, 134–135, 138, 140–144, 165, 170, 254.
Potomac River, 33, 126, 175, 180, 182–183, 186, 190, 202, 221–222, 225–226, 249.
Preston, General William, 54.

RANDOLPH, PEYTON, 19.
Rapidan River, 157, 257–263, 279.
Rappahannock River, 98, 126–127, 158, 162, 192 *et seq.*, 203, 208, 210, 213, 216, 218, 262, 266.
Reams Station, 292, 297.
Reynolds, General, 118, 121–122, 229.
Richmond, 95, 108–109, 129–130, 141, 151, 192, 224, 261–262, 267, 280 *et seq.*
Riley, General, 47–48.
Roanoke Island, 125.
Rodes, General R. E., 232, 269, 271.
Romancoke, 86.
Rosecrans, General W. S., 118, 120–122.
Rosser, General, 303.
Rust, Colonel, 119–120.

SAILOR'S CREEK, 305.
Salem Church, battle of, 215.
San Antonio, 60; Hacienda of, 49, 52.
Santa Anna, General, 42, 44, 46.

Savage's Station, battle of, 147.
Savannah, 126, 129.
Scott, General Winfield, 44–46, 51–54, 83, 88, 90, 93.
Secession, constitutional aspect of, 64–66; economic causes of, 66–70; moral causes of, 74–77; general causes, 81.
Sedgwick, General, 203–205, 213–215, 264, 266.
Seven Pines, battle of, 135.
Sewell's Mountain, 121.
Seward, William H., 79.
Sharpsburg, battle of, 174 *et seq.*
Shenandoah Valley, 29, 111, 128, 131–132, 174, 176, 189, 222–223.
Shepherdstown, 176, 225.
Sheridan, General Philip H., 273, 288, 294 *et seq.*, 303, 305 *et seq.*
Sherman, General William T., 102, 260.
Shields, General, 53, 151.
Shirley, 25, 29.
Sickles, General Daniel E., 211–214, 240, 242.
Sigel, General, 282.
Slaughter's Mountain, 157.
Slavery, 66, 70–73, 76, 80, 83, 86–87.
Slocum, General, 211, 227.
Smith, Gerrit, 77.
Smith, General G. W., 136.
Smith, General Persifer, 53.
South Carolina, 65, 101, 114, 124, 139, 258.
South Mountain, battle of, 179.
Spotswood, Governor Alexander, 16, 29.
Stafford Heights, 195 *et seq.*, 206.
Stanton, Edwin M., 191.
Stoneman, General, 203–205.
Stowe, Mrs. H. B., 76.
Stratford, 18, 25–29.
Stuart, General J. E. B., at Harper's Ferry, during Brown raid, 63; ride around McClellan, 139; expedition against White House on the York River, 145; at Erlington Heights, 150; operations on the Rappahannock, 158; at Cedar Creek, 159; screens Lee's advance into Maryland, 176; at South Mountain, 179; raid across the Potomac after battle of Sharpsburg, 189; part in battle of Chancellorsville, 205, 208, 215; screens Lee's advance toward Pennsylvania, 224; raid before battle of Gettysburg, 224–225; arrives at Gettysburg, 243; reports to Lee Meade's advance toward Mine Run, 257; before Spottsylvania Court-House, 268; death, 273.
Suffolk, 202.
Sulphur Springs, 159.
Sumner, General E. V., 58, 136, 147, 169, 196–199.
Swinton, William, 278.

Taylor, Colonel Walter H., 347.
Taylor, General Zachary, 42, 83.
Tennessee, 73, 80, 82, 98, 182.
Territories, struggle for the, 77–78.

Texas, 59, 174.
Thomas, General George H., 260, 300.
Thoroughfare Gap, 160–164, 171.
Turner's Gap, 179.
Turner, Nat, 40.
Twiggs, General, 47–48.

VENABLE, COLONEL CHARLES S., 237, 347.
Vera Cruz, 44.
Vicksburg, 221–222, 236, 250, 258.
Virginia, 12–14, 28, 65, 73, 82–83, 86, 114, 186, 250, 258.

WALKER, GENERAL FRANCIS A., 278.
Warren, General G. K., 242, 254, 264, 266, 297.
Warrenton, 159, 190.
Washington, George, 19, 20–21, 25, 32, 82, 90, 366.
Washington, Martha, 32.
Washington, city, 33, 62, 82, 110, 113–114, 128–129, 131–132, 155, 158, 172–173, 181, 190–191, 222, 224–225, 228, 235, 239, 292.
Washington College, 31, 320 *et seq.*
Webster, Daniel, 69.
Westmoreland County, 25, 28.
West Point Military Academy, 37, 58, 107.
West Virginia, 80, 98, 111, 115 *et seq.*, 123, 128.
White House, 30, 32, 86, 135, 140, 143–145.
White Oak Swamp, 146–147.
Whittier, John G., 75.
Wilcox, General, 242, 291.
Wilderness, operations in, 261–263.
Williamsburg, 133.
Wilson, General, 291.
Winchester, 111, 189, 223; battle of, 133.
Wise, General Henry A., 116, 120.
Wolseley, Viscount, 365.
Wool, General J. E., 42.
Worth, General, 40, 50–51.
Wright, General M. J., 242.

YORK RIVER, 134, 138, 145, 262, 266.
Yorktown, 133.

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